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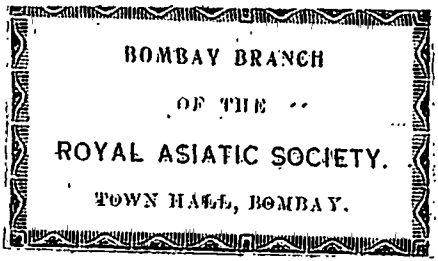

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WHIMSICALITIES,

A PERIODICAL GATHERING.

BY

THOMAS HOOD,

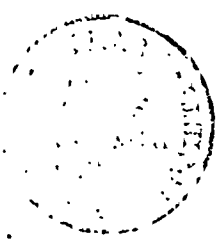
AUTHOR OF

"THE COMIC ANNUAL," "WHIMS AND ODDITIES," &c.

With Numerous Illustrations, from Designs by Leech.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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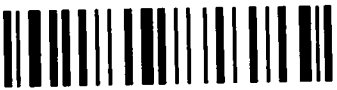
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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

	PAGE
MR. CHUBB: A PISCATORY ROMANCE	1
EPIGRAM, ON THE SUPERIORITY OF MACHINERY	28
A CUSTOM-HOUSE BREEZE	29
A VERY SO-SO CHARACTER	31
NOTES ON SHAKSPEARE	31
PARTY SPIRIT	33
NEWS FROM CHINA	34
NEW HARMONY	77
ETCHING MORALIZED	80
A REFLECTION ON NEW YEAR'S EVE	90
THE HAPPIEST MAN IN ENGLAND	91
SPRING: A NEW VERSION	105
THE LONGEST HOUR IN MY LIFE	107
PIROUETTES	135
AN UNDERTAKER	136
A FIRST ATTEMPT IN RHYME	141
HORSE AND FOOT	145
EPIGRAM, ON THE CHINESE TREATY	153
THE SEASON	154
MR. WITHERING'S CONSUMPTION AND ITS CURE	155
THE UNIVERSITY FEUD	174

PAGE.

DIABOLICAL SUGGESTIONS 188

A HARD CASE 214

ON THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY, TAKEN BY THE DAGUERREOTYPE 217

THE LEE SHORE 218

ENGLISH RETROGRESSION 219

THE CAMBERWELL BEAUTY 222

EPIGRAM, ON THE DEPRECIATED MONEY . . . 249

THE LITTLE BROWNS 250

THE TURTLES 255

EPIGRAM 261

THE CONFESSIONS OF A PHŒNIX 262

THE OMNIBUS 303

MR. WAKLEY AND THE POETS 309

MR. CHUBB:

A PISCATORY ROMANCE.

CHAPTER I.

"Let me live harmlessly, and near the brink
Of Trent or Avon have a dwelling place,
Where I may see my quill or cork down sink
With eager bite of Perch, or Bleak, or Dace."

J. DAVORS.

"I care not, I, to fish in seas,
Fresh rivers best my mind do please,
Whose sweet calm course I contemplate,
And seek in life to imitate."

PISCATOR'S SONG.

"The ladies, angling in the chrystal lake,
Feast on the waters with the prey they take,
At once victorious with their lines and eyes,
They make the fishes and the men their prize."

WALLER.

MR. CHUBB was not, by habit and repute, a fisherman. Angling had never been practically his hobby. He was none of those enthusiasts in the gentle craft, who as soon as close time comes to an end, are sure to be seen in a punt at Hampton Deeps, under the arches of Kew Bridge, or on the

banks of the New River, or the Lea, trolling for jack, ledgering for barbel, spinning for trout, roving for perch, dapping for chub, angling for gudgeon, or whipping for bleak. He had never fished but once in his life, on a chance holiday, and then caught but one bream, but that once sufficed to attach him to the pastime; it was so still, so quiet, so lonely; the very thing for a shy, bashful, nervous man, as taciturn as a post, as formal as a yew hedge, and as sedate as a quaker. Nevertheless he did not fall in love with fishing, as some do, rashly and madly, but as became his character, discreetly and with deliberation. It was not a hasty passion, but a sober preference founded on esteem, and accordingly instead of plunging at once into the connexion, he merely resolved, in his heart, that at some future time he would retire from the hosiery line, and take to one of gut, horsehair, or silk.

In pursuance of this scheme, whilst he steadily amassed the necessary competence, he quietly accumulated the other requisites; from time to time investing a few more hundreds in the funds, and occasionally adding a fresh article to his tackle, or a new guide, or treatise to his books on the art. Into these volumes, at his leisure, he dipped, gradually storing his mind with the piscatory rules, "line upon line, and precept upon precept," till in theory

he was a respectable proficient. And in his Sunday walks, he commonly sought the banks of one or other of our Middlesex rivers, where, glancing at sky and water, with a speculative eye, he would whisper to himself—"a fine day for the perch," or "a likely hole for a chub;" but from all actual practise he religiously abstained, carefully hoarding it up, like his money, at compound interest, for that delicious Otium-and-Water, which, sooner or later, Hope promised he should enjoy

In the mean time, during one of these suburban rambles, he observed, near Enfield Chase, a certain row of snug little villas, each with its own garden, and its own share of the New River, which flowed between the said pleasure grounds on one side, and a series of private meadows on the other. The houses, indeed, were in pairs, two under one roof, but each garden was divided from the next one by an evergreen fence, tall and thick enough to screen the proprietor from neighbourly observation; whilst the absence of any public footpath along the fields equally secured the residents from popular curiosity. A great consideration with an angler, who, near the metropolis, is too liable to be accosted by some confounded hulking fellow with "What sport, —how do they bite?"—or annoyed by some pestilent little boy, who will intrude in his swim.

"Yes, *that's* the place for me," thought Mr. Chubb, especially alluding to a green lawn which extended to the water's edge—not forgetting a tall lignum vitæ tree, against which, seated in an ideal arm chair, he beheld his own Eidolon, in the very act of pulling out an imaginary fish, as big and bright as a fresh herring.

"Yes, that *is* the place for me!" muttered Mr. Chubb: "so snug—so retired—so all to one's self! Nobody to overlook, nothing to interrupt one!—No towing-path—no barges—no thoroughfare—Bless my soul! it's a perfect little Paradise!"

And it was the place for him indeed—for some ten years afterwards the occupant died suddenly of apoplexy—whereupon Mr. Chubb bought the property, sold off his business, and retiring to the villa, which he christened "Walton Cottage," prepared to realize the long water-souchyish dream of his middle age.

"And did he catch any thing?"

My dear Miss Hastie—do, pray, allow the poor gentleman a few moments to remove, and settle himself in his new abode, and in the mean while, let me recommend you to the care of that allegorical Job in petticoats, who is popularly supposed to recreate herself, when she is not smiling on a monument, by fishing in a punt.

CHAPTER II.

Eureka!

The day, the happy day is come at last, and no bride, in her pearl silk and orange flowers, after a protracted courtship, ever felt a more blissful flutter of spirits than Mr. Chubb, as in a bran new white hat, fustian jacket, and drab leggings, he stands on the margin of the New River, about to become an angler for better or worse.

The morning is propitious. The sky is slightly clouded, and a gentle southerly zephyr just breathes, here and there, on the grey water, which is thickly studded with little dimples that dilate into rings,—signs, as sure as those in the zodiac, of Aquarius and Pisces. A comfortable arm-chair is planted in the shadow of the tall lignum vitæ—to the right, on the grass, lies a landing net, and on the left, a basket big enough to receive a Salmon. Mr. Chubb, himself, stands in front of the chair; and having satisfied his mind, by a panoramic glance, of his complete solitude, begins precipitately to prepare his tackle, by drawing the strings of a long brown holland case into a hard double knot. But he is too happy to swear, so he only blesses his soul, patiently unravels the knot, and complacently allows the rod to glide out of the linen cover.

With deliberate care he fits each joint in its socket, —from the butt glittering with bright brass, to the tapering top—and then with supple wrist, proves the beautiful pliancy of the "complete thing." Next from the black leather pocket book he selects a line of exquisite fineness, and attaches it by the loop to the small brazen wire ring at the point of the whalebone. The fine gut, still retaining its angles from the reel, like a long zigzag of gossamer, vibrates to the elastic rod, which in turn quivers to the agitated hand, tremulous with excitement. But what ails Mr. Chubb? All at once he starts off into the strangest and wildest vagaries, —now clutching like Macbeth at the air drawn dagger, and then suddenly wheeling round like a dog trying to catch his own tail—now snatching at some invisible blue bottle buzzing about his nose, —next flea-hunting about his clothes, and then staring skywards with goggle eyes, and round open mouth, as if he would take a minnow! A few bars rest—and off he goes again,—jumping,—spinning, —skipping right and left—no urchin striving to apprehend Jack O'Lantern ever cut more capers.

He is endeavouring to catch his line that he may bait the hook; but the breeze carries it far a-field, and the spring of the rod jerks it to and fro, here and there and everywhere but into his eager hand.

Sometimes the shot swing into his eye, sometimes the float bounces into his mouth or bobs against his nose, and then, half caught, they spring up perpendicularly, and fall down again, with the clatter of hail, on the crown of his white beaver. At last he succeeds—at least the hook anchors in the skirts of his jacket. But he is in too good humour to curse. Propping the rod upright against the tall lignum vitæ, he applies both hands to the rescue, and has just released the hook from the fustian, when down drops the rod, with a terrible lash of its top-joint in the startled stream,—whilst the barbed steel, escaping from his right finger and thumb, flies off like a living insect, and fastens its sting in the cuff of his left sleeve with such good will, that it must be cut out with a penknife. Still he does not blaspheme. At some damage to the cloth, the Kirby is set free—and the line is safe in hand. A little more cautiously he picks up the dripping rod, and proceeds to bait the hook—not without great difficulty and delay, for a worm is a wriggling slippery thing, with a natural aversion to being lined with wire, and when the fingers are tremulous besides—the job is a stiff one. Nevertheless he contrives, ill or well, to impale a small brandling; but remembering that he ought first to have plumbed the depth of the water, removes the

worm and substitutes a roll of thin lead. Afterwards he adjusts the float to the proper soundings, and then there is all the wriggling slippery nervous process to be gone through over again. But Patience, the angler's virtue, still supports him. The hook is baited once more,—he draws a long deep sigh of satisfaction, and warily poising his rod, lets the virgin line drop gently into the rippling stream!

Now then all is right! Alas, no! The float instead of swimming erect, sinks down on its side for want of sufficient ballast; a trying dilemma, for the cure requires a rather delicate operation. In fact, six split shot successively escape from his trembling fingers—a seventh he succeeds in adjusting to the line, on which he rashly attempts to close the gaping lead with his teeth; but unluckily his incisors slip beside the leaden pellet, and with a horrid cranch go clean through the crisp gut!

Still he does not blaspheme; but blessing his body, this time, as well as his soul, carefully fits a new bottom on the line, and closes the cleft shot with the proper instrument, a pair of pliers. Then he baits again, and tries the float, which swims with the correct cock—and all is right at last! The dreams, the schemes, the hopes, the wishes of a dozen long years are realized; and if there be a

little pain at one end of the line, what enormous pleasure at the other!

Merrily the float trips, again and again, from end to end of the swim, and is once more gliding down with the current, when suddenly the quill stops—slowly revolves—bobs—bobs again—and dives under the water.

The Angler strikes convulsively—extravagantly—insanely; and something swift and silvery as a shooting star, flies over his head. It should, by rights, be a fish—yet there is none on his hook; but searching farther and farther, all up the lawn, to the back door, there certainly lies something bright and quivering on the stone step—something living, scaly, and about an inch long—in short, Mr. Chubb's first bleak!

CHAPTER III.

Happy Mr. Chubb! Happy on Thursday, happier on Friday, and happiest on Saturday!

For three delightful days he had angled, each time with better success, and increasing love for the art, when Sunday intervened—the longest *dry* Sunday he had ever spent in his life. This short fast, however, only served to whet his appetite for the sport, and to send him the earlier on Monday to

the river's edge, not without some dim superstitious notion of catching the fine hog-backed perch he had hooked in a dream over night.

By this time practice had made him perfect in his manipulations. His rod was put together in a crack—the line attached to it in a jiffy, the hook baited in a twinkling, and all ready to begin. But first he took his customary survey, to assure him that his solitude was inviolate—that there was no eye to startle his *mauvaise honte*, for he was as sensitive to observation, as some skins to new flannel: but all was safe. There was not a horse or cow even to stare at him from the opposite meadow—no human creature within ken, to censure his performance or criticise his appearance. He might have fished, if he had pleased, in his night-cap, dressing-gown, and slippers.

The ineffable value of such a privacy is only appreciable by shy, sensitive men, who ride hobbies. But Toby Shandy knew it when he gave *a peep over the horn-beam hedge* before he took a first whiff of the ivory pipe attached to his smoking artillery. And so did Mr. Chubb, as after a preliminary pinch of snuff, and an extatic rub of his hands, he gently swung the varnished float, shotted line, and baited hook, from his own freehold lawn, into the exclusive water.

The weather was lovely, the sky of an unclouded blue, and the whole landscape flooded with sunshine, which would have been too bright but that a westerly breeze swept the gloss off the river, and allowed the Angler to watch, undazzled, his neat tip-capped float. Thrice the buoyant quill had travelled from end to end of the property, and was midway on its fourth voyage, when—without the least hint of bite or nibble—it was violently twitched up, and left to dangle in the air, whilst Mr. Chubb distractedly stared on a new object in the stream.

A strange float had come into his swim!

And such a float!—A great green and white pear-shaped thing—of an extra size, expressly manufactured for the most turbulent waters; but magnified, by the enormity of the trespass, into a ship's buoy!

Yes—there it was in his own private fishing-place, down which it drifted five or six good yards before it brought up, on its side, when the force of the current driving the lower part of the line towards the surface, disclosed a perfect necklace of large swanshot, and the shank of a No. 1 hook, baited, as it seemed, with a small hard dumpling!

Mr. Chubb was petrified—Gorgonized—basilisked! His heart and his legs gave way together, and he sank into the elbow-chair; his jaw locked,

his eyes protruding in a fixed stare, and altogether in physiognomy extremely like the fish called a Pope or Ruff, which, on being hooked, is said to go into a sort of spasmodic fit, through surprise and alarm.

However, disappointment and vexation gradually gave way to indignation, and planting the chair against the evergreen hedge, he mounted on the seat, with a brace of objurgations on his lips—the one adapted to a great hulking fellow, the other for an infernal little boy; but before either found vent, down he scrambled again, with breakneck precipitation, and dropped into the seat. To swear was impossible—to threaten or vituperate quite out of the question, or even to remonstrate. He who had not the courage to be polite to a lady, to be rude or harsh to one?—never! What then could he do? Nothing, but sit staring at the great green and white float, as it lay on its side, making a fussy ripple in the water, till SHE chose to withdraw it.

At last, after a very tedious interval, the obnoxious object suddenly began to scud up the stream, and then rising, with almost as much splutter as a wild duck, flew into the neighbouring garden. The swanshot and the hook flew after it, but the little dumpling, parting asunder, had escaped from the steel, and the halves separately

drifted down with the current, each nibbled at by its own circle of New River bleak.

Mr. Chubb waited a minute, and then fell to angling again; but as silently, stealthily, and sneakingly, as if instead of fishing in his own waters he had been poaching in those of Cashiobury—

"Because Lord Essex wouldn't give him leave."

But even this faint enjoyment was shortlived. All at once he heard, to the left, a plash as if a bull-frog or water-rat had plumped into the river, and down came the great green and white nuisance, again dancing past the private hedge, and waltzing with every little eddy that came in its way. Of course it would stop at the old spot—but no, its tether had been indefinitely prolonged, and on it came, bobbing and becking, till within a foot of the little slim tipcapped quill of our Fisherman. He instantly pulled up, but too late—the bottoms of the two lines had already grappled. There was a hitch and then a jerk—the swanshot with a centrifugal impulse went spinning round and round the other tackle, till silk and gut were complicated in an inveterate tangle. The Unknown, feeling the resistance, immediately struck, and began to haul in. The perplexed Bachelor, incapable of a

"Hallo!" only blessed his own soul in a whisper, and opposed a faint resistance. The strain increased; and he held more firmly, desperately hoping that his own line would give way: but, instead of any such breakage, as if instinct with the very spirit of mischief, the top joint of his rod suddenly sprang out of its socket, and went flying, as the other lithe top seemed to beckon it—into HER garden!

It was gone, of course, for ever. As to applying for it, little Smith would as soon have asked for the ball that he had pitched through a pane of plate glass into Mrs. Jones's drawing-room.

All fishing was over for the day; and the discomfited Angler was about to unscrew his rod and pack up, when a loud "hem!" made him start and look towards the sound—and lo! the unknown Lady, having mounted a chair of her own, was looking over the evergreen hedge and holding out the truant top joint to its owner. The little shy bashful Bachelor, still in a nervous agony, would fain have been blind to this civility; but the cough became too importunate to be shirked, and blushing till his very hair and whiskers seemed to redden into carotty, he contrived to stumble up to the fence and stammer out a jumble of thanks and apologies.

"Really ma'am—I'm extremely sorry—you're too good—so very awkward—quite distressing—I'm exceedingly obliged I'm sure—very warm indeed," —and seizing the top-joint he attempted to retreat with it, but he was not to escape so easily.

"Stop, sir!" cried one of the sweetest voices in the world, "the lines are entangled."

"Pray don't mention it," said the agitated Mr. Chubb, vainly fumbling in the wrong waistcoat pocket for his penknife. "I'll cut it ma'am—I'll bite it off."

"Oh, pray don't!" exclaimed the lady; "it would be a sin and a shame to spoil such a beautiful line. Pray what do you call it?"

What an unlucky question. For the whole world Mr. Chubb would not have named the material—which he at last contrived to describe as "a very fine sort of fiddle-string."

"Oh, I understand," said the Lady. "How fine it is—and yet how strong. What a pity it is in such a tangle! But I think with a little time and patience I can unravel it!"

"Really, ma'am, I'm quite ashamed—so much trouble—allow *me*, ma'am." And the little Bachelor climbed up into his elbow-chair, where he stood tottering with agitation, and as red in the face, and as hot all over, as a boiling lobster.

"I think, sir," suggested the Lady, "if you would just have the goodness to hold these loops open while I pass the other line through them—"

"Yes, ma'am, yes—exactly—by all means—" and he endeavoured to follow her instructions, by plunging the short thick fingers of each hand into the hank; the Lady meanwhile poking her float, like a shuttle, up and down, to and fro, through the intricacies of the tangled lines.

"Bless my soul!" thought Mr. Chubb, "what a singular situation! A lady I never saw before—a perfect stranger!—and here I am face to face with her—across a hedge—with our fingers twisting in and out of the same line, as if we were playing at cat's-cradle!"

CHAPTER IV.

"Heyday! It is a long job!" exclaimed the Lady, with a gentle sigh.

"It is indeed, ma'am," said Mr. Chubb, with a puff of breath as if he had been holding it the whole time of the operation.

"My fingers quite ache," said the Lady.

"I'm sure—I'm very sorry—I beg them a thousand pardons," said Mr. Chubb, with a bow to the hand before him. And what a hand it was!

So white and so plump, with little dimples on the knuckles,—and then such long taper fingers, and filbert-like nails!

"Are you fond of fishing, sir?" asked the Lady, with a full look in his face for the answer.

"O, very, ma'am—very partial indeed!"

"So am I, sir. It's a taste derived, I believe, from my reading."

"Then mayhap, ma'am," said Mr. Chubb, his voice quavering at his own boldness, "if it isn't too great a liberty—you have read the 'Complete Angler?'"

"What, Izaak Walton's? O, I dote on it! The nice, dear old man! So pious, and so sentimental!"

"Certainly, ma'am—as you observe—and so uncommonly skilful."

"O! and so natural! and so rural! Such sweet green meadows, with honeysuckle hedges; and the birds, and the innocent lambs, and the cows, and that pretty song of the milk-maid's!"

"Yes, ma'am, yes," said Mr. Chubb, rather hastily, as if afraid she would quote it; and blushing up to his crown, as though she had actually invited him to "live with her and be her love."

"There was an answer written to it, I believe, by Sir Walter Raleigh?"

"There was, ma'am—or Sir Walter Scott—I really forget which," stammered the bewildered Bachelor, with whom the present tense had completely obliterated the past. As to the future, nothing it might produce would surprise him.

"Now, then, sir, we will try again!" And the Lady resumed her task, in which Mr. Chubb assisted her so effectually, that at length one line obtained its liberty, and by a spring so sudden, as to excite a faint scream.

"Gracious powers!" exclaimed the horrified little man, almost falling from his chair, and clasping his hands.

"I thought the hook was in my eye," said the Lady; "but it is only in my hair." From which she forthwith endeavoured to disentangle it, but with so little success, that in common politeness Mr. Chubb felt bound to tender his assistance. It was gratefully accepted; and in a moment the most bashful of bachelors found himself in a more singular position than ever—namely, with his short thick fingers entwined with a braid of the glossiest, finest, softest auburn hair that ever grew on a female head.

"Bless my soul and body!" said Mr. Chubb to himself; "the job with the gut and silk lines was nothing to this!"

CHAPTER V.

That wearisome hook! It clung to the tress in which it had fastened itself with lover-like pertinacity! In the mean time the Lady, to favour the operation, necessarily inclined her head a little downwards and sideways, so that when she looked at Mr. Chubb, she was obliged to glance at him from the corners of her eyes—as coquettish a position as female artifice, instead of accident, could have produced. Nothing, indeed, could be more bewitching! Nothing so disconcerting! It was a wonder the short thick fingers ever brought their task to an end, they fumbled so abominably—the poor man forgot what he was about so frequently! At last the soft glossy braid, sadly disarranged, dropped again on the fair smooth cheek.

"Is the hook out?" asked the Lady.

"It *is*, ma'am—thank God!" replied the little Bachelor, with extraordinary emphasis and fervour; but the next moment making a grimace widely at variance with the implied pleasure.

"Why it's in your own thumb!" screamed the Lady, forgetting in her fright that it was a strange gentleman's hand she caught hold of so unceremoniously.

"It's nothing, ma'am—don't be alarmed;—nothing at all—only—bless my soul,—how very ridiculous!"

"But it must hurt you, sir."

"Not at all, ma'am—quite the reverse. I don't feel it—I don't, indeed!—Merely through the skin, ma'am,—and if I could only get at my penknife——"

"Where is it, sir?"

"Stop, ma'am—here—I've got it," said Mr. Chubb, his heart beating violently at the mere idea of the long taper fingers in his left waistcoat-pocket —"But unluckily it's my right hand!"

"How very distressing!" exclaimed the lady; "and all through extricating me!"

"Don't mention it, ma'am, pray don't—you're perfectly welcome."

"If I thought," said the lady, "that it *was* only through the skin—I had once to cut one out for poor dear Mr. Hooker," and she averted her head as if to hide a tear.

"She's a widow, then!" thought Mr. Chubb to himself. "But what does that signify to me—and as to her cutting out the hook, it's a mere act of common charity."

And so, no doubt, it was; for no sooner was the operation performed, than dropping his hand as if

it had been a stone, or a brick, or a lump of clay, she restored the penknife, and cutting short his acknowledgments with a grave "Good morning, sir," skipped down from her chair, and walked off, rod in hand, to her house.

Mr. Chubb watched her till she disappeared, and then getting down from his own chair, took a seat in it, and fell into a reverie, from which he was only roused by putting his thumb and finger into the wrong box, and feeling a pinch of gentles, instead of snuff.

CHAPTER VI.

The next day Mr. Chubb angled as usual; but with abated pleasure. His fishery had been disturbed; his solitude invaded—he was no longer Walton and Zimmerman rolled into one. From certain prophetic misgivings he had even abandoned the costume of the craft,—and appeared in a dress more suited to a public dinner than his private recreation—a blue coat and black kerseymere trowsers—instead of the fustian jacket, shorts, and leathern gaiters.

The weather was still propitious, but he could neither confine his eye to his quill nor his thoughts to the pastime. Every moment he expected to hear the splash of the great green and white float,

—and to see it come sailing into his swim. But he watched and listened in vain. Nothing drifted down with the current but small sticks and straws or a stray weed,—nothing disturbed the calm surface of the river, except the bleak, occasionally rising at a fly. A furtive glance assured him that nobody was looking at him over the evergreen fence—for that day, at least, he had the fishery all to himself, and he was beginning, heart and soul to enjoy the sport,—when, from up the stream, he heard a startling plunge, enough to frighten all the fish up to London or down to Ware! The flop of the great green and white float was a whisper to it —but before he could frame a guess at the cause, a ball of something, as big as his own head, plumped into his swim, with a splash that sent up the water into his very face! The next moment a sweet low voice called to him by his name.

It was the Widow! He knew it without turning his head. By a sort of mental clairvoyance he saw her distinctly looking at him, with her soft liquid hazel eyes, over the privet hedge. He immediately fixed his gaze more resolutely on his float, and determined to be stone deaf. But the manœuvre was of no avail. Another ball flew bomb-like through the air, and narrowly missing his rod, dashed—saluting him with a fresh sprinkle—into the river!

"Bless my soul," thought Mr. Chubb, carefully laying his rod across the arms of his elbow-chair "when shall I get any fishing!"

"A fine morning, Mr. Chubb."

"Very, ma'am—very, indeed—quite remarkable," stammered Mr. Chubb, bowing as he spoke, plucking off his hat, and taking two or three unsteady steps towards the fence.

"My gardener has made me some ground bait, Mr. Chubb, and I told him to throw the surplus towards your part of the river."

"You're very good, ma'am,—I'm vastly obliged I'm sure," said the little Bachelor, quite overwhelmed by the kindness, and wiping his face with his silk handkerchief, as if it had just received the favour of another sprinkle. "Charming weather, ma'am!"

"Oh, delightful!—It's quite a pleasure to be out of doors. By the bye, Mr. Chubb, I'm thinking of strolling—do you ever stroll, sir?"

"Ever what?" asked the astounded Mr. Chubb, his blood suddenly boiling up to Fever Heat.

"For jack and pike, sir—I've just been reading about it in the Complete Angler."

"O, she means *trolling*," thought Mr. Chubb, his blood as rapidly cooling down to temperate. "Why, no, ma'am—no. The truth is,—asking

your pardon,—there are no jack or pike, I believe, in this water."

"Indeed! That's a pity. And yet, after all, I don't think I could put the poor frog on the hook—and then sew up his mouth,—I'm sure I couldn't!"

"Of course not, ma'am—of course not," said the little Bachelor, with unusual warmth of manner,—"You have too much sensibility."

"Do you think, then, sir, that angling is cruel?"

"Why really, ma'am"—but the poor man had entangled himself in a dilemma, and could get no farther.

"Some persons say it is," continued the Lady,—"and really to think of the agonies of the poor worm on the hook—but for my part I always fish with paste."

"Yes—I know it," thought Mr. Chubb,—"with a little hard dumpling."

"And then it is so much cleaner," said the lady.

"Certainly, ma'am, certainly," replied Mr. Chubb, with a particular reference to a certain very white hand with long taper fingers. "Nothing like paste, ma'am—or a fly—if it was not a liberty, ma'am, I should think you would prefer an artificial fly."

"An artificial one!—O, of all things in the

world!" exclaimed the Lady with great animation. "*That* cannot feel!—But then"—and she shook her beautiful head despondingly—"they are so hard to make. I have read the rules for artificial flies in the book,—and what with badger's hair, and cock's cackles (she meant hackles), and whipping your shanks (she meant the hook's), and then drubbing your fur (she meant dubbing with fur), O, I never could do it!"

Mr. Chubb was silent. He had artificial flies in his pocket-book, and yearned to offer one—but, deterred by certain recollections, he shrank from the task of affixing it to her line. And yet to oblige a lady—and such a fine woman too—and besides the light fall of a fly on the water would be so much better than the flopping of that abominable great green and white float!—Yes, he would make the offer of it, and he did. It was graciously accepted,—the rod was handed over the hedge, and the little Bachelor,—at a safe distance,—took off, with secret satisfaction, the silk line, its great green and white float, its swanshot, the No. 1 hook and its little hard dumpling. He then substituted a fine fly-line, with a small black ant-fly, and when all was ready, presented the apparatus to the lovely Widow, who was profuse in her acknowledgments. "There never was such a beautiful fly," she said,

"but the difficulty was how to throw it. She was only a Tryo (she meant a Tyro), and as such must throw herself on his neighbourly kindness, for a little instruction."

This information, as well as he could by precept and example, with a hedge between, the little Bachelor contrived to give; and then dismissed his fair pupil to whip for bleak; whilst with an internal "Thank Heaven!" he resumed his own apparatus, and began to angle for perch, roach, dace, gudgeons,—or anything else.

But his gratitude was premature—his float had barely completed two turns, when he heard himself hailed again from the privet hedge.

"Mr. Chubb! Mr. Chubb!"

"At your service, ma'am."

"Mr. Chubb, you will think me shockingly awkward, but I've switched off the fly,—your beautiful fly,—somewhere among the evergreens."

Slowly the Angler pulled up his line—at the sacrifice of what seemed a very promising nibble—and carefully deposited his rod again across the arms of the elbow chair.

"Bless my soul and body!" muttered Mr. Chubb, as he selected another fly from his pocket-book,—"when shall I ever get any fishing!"

CHAPTER VII.

Poor Mr. Chubb!

How little he dreamt—in all his twelve years dreaming, of ever retiring from trade into such a pretty business as that in which he found himself involved! How little he thought, whilst studying the instructive dialogues of Venator and Viator with Piscator, that he should ever have a pupil in petticoats hanging on his own lips for lessons in the gentle art! Nor was it seldom that she required his counsel or assistance. Scarcely had his own line settled in the water, when he was summoned by an irresistible voice to the evergreen fence, and requested to perform some trivial office for a fair Neophyte, with the prettiest white hand, the softest hazel eyes, and the silkiest auburn hair he had ever seen. Sometimes it was to put a bait on her hook—sometimes to take off a fish—now to rectify her float—and now to screw or uncrew her rod. Not a day passed but the little Bachelor found himself *tête à tête* with the lovely Widow, across the privet hedge.

Little he thought, the while, that she was fishing for him, and that he was pouching the bait! But so it was:—for exactly six weeks from the day when

Mr. Chubb caught his first Bleak—Mrs. Hooker beheld at her feet her first Chubb!

What she did with him needs not to be told. Of course she did not give him away, like Venator's chub, to some poor body; or baste him, as Piscator recommends, with vinegar or verjuice. The probability is that she blushed, smiled, and gave him her hand; for if you walk, Gentle Reader, to Enfield, and inquire concerning a certain row of snug little villas, with pleasure-grounds bounded by the New River, you will learn that two of the houses, and two of the gardens, and two of the proprietors have been "thrown into one."

"And did they fish together, sir, after their marriage?"

Never! Mr. Chubb, indeed, often angled from morning till night, but Mrs. C. never wetted a line from one year's end to another.

EPIGRAM.

THE SUPERIORITY OF MACHINERY.

A Mechanic his labour will often discard
If the rate of his pay he dislikes;
But a clock—and its *case* is uncommonly hard—
Will continue to work though it *strikes*.

A CUSTOM-HOUSE BREEZE.

One day—no matter for the month or year,
A Calais packet, just come over,
And safely moor'd within the pier,
Began to land her passengers at Dover;
All glad to end a voyage long and rough,
And during which,
Through roll and pitch,
The Ocean-King had *sick*ophants enough!

Away, as fast as they could walk or run,
Eager for steady rooms and quiet meals,
With bundles, bags, and boxes at their heels,
Away the passengers all went, but one,
A female, who from some mysterious check,
Still linger'd on the steamer's deck,
As if she did not care for land a tittle,
For horizontal rooms, and cleanly victual—
Or nervously afraid to put
Her foot
Into an Isle described as "tight and little."

In vain commissioner and touter,
Porter and waiter throng'd about her;

Boring, as such officials only bore—
In spite of rope and barrow, knot, and truck,
Of plank and ladder, there she stuck,
She couldn't, no, she wouldn't go on shore.

"But, ma'am," the steward interfered,
"The wessel must be cleared.
You musn't stay aboard, ma'am, no one don't!
It's quite agin the orders so to do—
And all the passengers is gone but you."
Says she, "I cannot go ashore and won't!"
"You ought to!"
"But I can't!"
"You must!"
"I shan't!"

At last, attracted by the racket,
'Twixt gown and jacket,
The captain came himself, and cap in hand,
Begg'd very civilly to understand
Wherefore the lady could not leave the packet.

"Why then," the lady whispered with a shiver,
That made the accents quiver,
"I've got some foreign silks about me pinn'd,
In short so many things, all contraband,
To tell the truth I am afraid to land,
In such a *searching* wind!"

A VERY SO-SO CHARACTER.

"I TAKE it for granted," said Mrs. Wiggins, inquiring as to the character of a certain humble companion, "that she is temperate, conversible, and willing to make herself agreeable?"

"Quite," replied Mrs. Figgins, "Indeed, I never knew a young person *so so*ber, *so so*ciable, and *so so*licitous to please."

NOTES ON SHAKSPEARE.

IT is singular that none of the commentators on "The Merry Wives of Windsor" have hitherto attributed to *Sir John Falstaff* a tampering with the Black Art of Magic. There are at least as plausible grounds for such a supposition, as for some of the most elaborate of their conjectures, for not only does the Fat Knight undertake to personate that Witch the Wise Woman of Brentford, but he expressly hints to us that he himself was a Wizard, and popularly known as "Jack with his *Familiars*."

A proof of the antiquity of the practice of letting lodgings, or offices for merchants and lawyers, has been equally overlooked by the Annotators. It occurs, indeed, more than once, and in words that

might serve for a bill in a modern window—namely, "*Chambers let off.*"

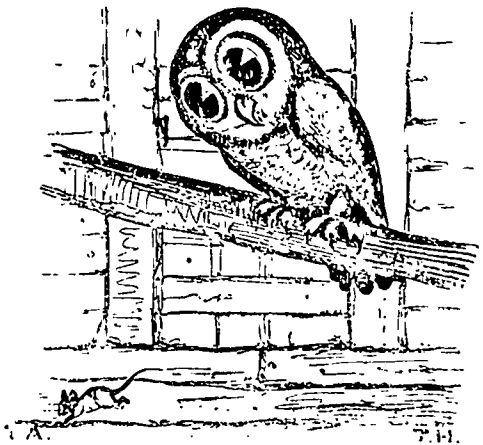
NOTE ON "KING JOHN."

Prince Arthur.—Must you with hot irons burn out both my eyes?
Hubert.—Young boy, I must.

In the barbarous cruelty proposed to be practised on Prince Arthur there appears to be some coincidence with a theory brought forward of late years, in reference to the Hanoverian Heir-Apparent: namely, that by the ancient laws of Germany the sovereignty could not be exercised by a person deprived of the sense of sight. Although "death" was indicated by the royal uncle in his conference with Hubert, it would seem as if John, shrinking from the guilt of actual murder, had subsequently contented himself with ordering that the young "serpent on his path" should be rendered incapable of reigning by the loss of his eyes. It was a particular act, intended for an especial purpose, expressly commanded by warrant, and Hubert was "sworn to do it."

Supposing, therefore, that the intention was simply to blind the victim, to disable him from the throne, not to inflict unnecessary torture, or endanger life, it is humbly suggested to future painters and stage-managers, that the inhuman deed would

not have been performed with great clumsy instruments like plumbers' irons, but more probably with heated metal skewers or bodkins, as the eyes of singing birds have been destroyed by fanciers—though for a different reason—with red-hot knitting-needles.



"MY EYES! THERE'S A MOUSE!"

PARTY SPIRIT.

"WHY did you not dine," said a Lord to a Wit,
"With the Whigs, you political sinner?"
"Why, really I meant, but had doubts how the *Pit*
Of my stomach would bear a Fox Dinner."

NEWS FROM CHINA.

Of the genuineness of the following letters there can be no doubt: the parties are all known to us, and if necessary, we could swear to the handwriting. But the internal evidence will satisfy any competent judge who knows any thing, by books or travel, of the Celestial Empire. No corrections have been attempted, whether in style or in the orthography (for example, Morphius for Morpheus, and Romus for Remus, in No. II.); and the only suppressions are of real names, and a few domestic particulars too private for the public.—Ed.

NO. I.

TO MR. ABEL DOTTIN, GROCER, MANCHESTER.

Dear Brother,—In spite of differings and I must say harshness on some points, you will be delighted to hear I have at last got a letter from dear Gus. How it came I do not quite know, but a most gratifying one to maternal feelings, and I should hope to others, however some people's prog-

nostifications are proved to be in the wrong. But I am not going to triumph over any one, tho' if I did, motherly joy might be my excuse, for her pride will rise up when a beloved son turns out such as to justify my fondest hopes, and do honour to her system of bringing up. That repays for all. Nobody knows the sacrifices I have gone through for his sake, indeed, such as nothing would reconcile to, except the reflection, it was all for his dear welfare, whatever others might think to the contrary. I have pinched myself in many ways both inside and out, and even more than prudence or health dictated, or even keeping up appearances; but a mother, like a pelican of the wilderness, will go shabby genteel or any thing for a beloved child. For of course his outfitting came very heavy, and I had to part with the Japan buffet and all my beautiful old chiney to make him fit for the Celestial Empire. Not to name all his little desideratums, which at such a time I could not grudge or refuse any thing he set his heart on to an only departing son for a foreign land. As is more than some people perhaps will simpathise with, but uncles an't mothers. Indeed, his goold watch and other nicknacks ran rather over than under your kind thirty pound. Then what with bullock trunks and regimentals and other items, besides chains and

trinkets to barter with the natives, came to a pretty penny, so as obliged me to sell out of my long annuities, and has sadly scrimped a narrow income. However I am now repaid for all my efforts and privations, and only my due and proper reward for my own sagacity and foresight in putting my dear Gus in a line of life adapted to his uncommon cleverness. Some people I know thought otherwise, but in common justice ought to acknowledge I always predicted my son would be a *shining character*. Those were my very words, and they have literally come as true as if I had been a fortune-telling gipsy. So much for cultivating genius, and which you'll excuse my saying, the mother it springs from must naturally know more about than even the best of uncles. Indeed, you know yourself, to be candid, I always said he was a genius out of the common way, and was the first to put it into his head. And now I have reason to be thankful that I never thwarted him, as some people wished, but always let him have his own way in every thing, and the consequence is, instead of his being a plodding tradesman, or a low mechanick, my Augustus has distinguished himself as a shining character, and for what we know may be at this very moment a Colonel, a General, or a Plenipenitentiary. Every bodies nevies do not get up to

that! As for himself, poor fellow, whatever other people may have said or done agin him, it is plain he harbours no malice or anymosity, or he wouldn't joke so good-humoured about your pigtail. But he always was of a forgiving disposition, bless him, and a generous nature besides, and no doubt when he comes back will bring heaps of foreign presents for all his friends and relatives. For my own part I seem to see the house turned into a perfect British Museum, what with great porcelain jars, and little tiny shoes, and bows and arrows, and the frightfullest staring idols. And the Chinese make the most beautiful carved ivory fans. So I need not grudge the Japan buffet and the old chiney,—and instead of going shabby genteel, who knows but I may some day go to routs and parties, in a rich filial silk, and be fetched home with a splendid illuminated lantern? But those are pictures some people won't or can't enter into, so I say no more. But it stands to reason one's sister must surely reflect more credit on him properly consulting appearances according to her rank in life, and handsomely dressed and set off as if she had just walked out of the Book of Beauty, than if she had just come out of Mrs. Rundle's Domestic Cookery—which is too often the case.

I enclose dear Gussy's letter, of which I hope you

will take religious care of, and not file it into holes like a common trumpery business letter, as some in trade are too apt. Some sentences read oddish, but you must not be set agin it by his style, which to be sure ought not to be exactly like other people's who have no shining parts. At any rate, it shows uncommon cleverness and a good heart. I don't mind owning I enjoyed a good cry over those infantile Chinese fondlings, and then that savage monkey! But some people are of more untender natures, not having had any family of their own. How would you like *your* Gus if you had one to be shot and peppered at by a set of long pigtailed savages, contrary to all laws human and divine, as if he was no better than a preserved pheasant or a poached hare? I do hope the wretches will be well civilized for it with a broadside! But what can one expect from such wicked heathens? I only hope he won't be tempted ashore among them, but he's very venturesome, for if they once catch my dear Gus, near any of their nasty Joss houses, they will idolize him as sure as fate!

A full sheet compels to conclude with my love—with which your nevy if he was here would unite—but alas there's oceans between. Lord preserve him from that and all other perils by sea and

land, not forgetting the barbarous inhabitants of China and Tartarus! With which I remain, dear Brother,

Your affectionate sister,

JEMIMA BUDGE.

Wisbech, 13 October.

NO. II.

DEAR MOTHER,—Since my last from the Cape,* I suppose you have been in a regular slow fever of maternal solicitude to hear of my arrival among the Mandarines—enquiring at every Tea Warehouse and Crockery shop whether they have heard any thing from Canton, and expecting twelve general posts a day, and twenty particular ones with a letter from "my son in China."

Well, here it is at last, warranted oriental, and if it don't go thro' the parish like the Asiatic Cholera I know nothing about letters from sons in foreign parts. Of course Mrs. Dewdny will have the first reading of it and Mrs. Spooner the last, as she always has of her own novelties in her Circulating Library. I think I see her with her hands flapping up and down, and hear her clucking with her tongue and saying,

"Well—dear me—I never! To think of Mister

* This letter never reached its destination.

Gustavus being where all the tea comes from—— By the by, Mrs. B., you don't want any real Howqua?—and the ladies can't walk for their little shoes—Captain Pidding's you know—well, I'll order Lord Jocelyn—in catty packages, you see, ma'am—for the Library—and so Mister Gustavus really is at Kang Tong—did you ever read Letters from the Dead to the Living?—well I never!—dear me!"

However, here I am—knocking about in the Chinese waters, not black or green though, as Mrs. Spooner would suppose, but decidedly yellow. Just fancy an ocean of pea-soup, such as you used to make at home and then talk of throwing it over the house,—quite as thick and of the same colour, with lots of weeds floating about in it like the mint, but whole instead of crumbled—in short, so like the real thing that I was spoon enough to taste it; and really it might pass for work-house pea-soup, only salted with rather a heavy hand.

Well, after soup, fish—and what do you think of square miles of it, as we neared the land,—whole shoals, big and little, from sprats up to porpuses, with strange sorts never seen before, all floating on the surface belly upwards, just like old Parkington's carp when somebody had hocussed them with Cockulus Indicus.

However, this time it was that old buffer Commissioner Lin who had poisoned all the finny and scaly tribes by throwing such lots of opium into the river at Canton. Even the gulls were affected by it, from feeding on the small fry, and sat rocking on the waves dead asleep. So the drug really must be as diliterious as the Quakers said it is—even if we had not come across a more striking proof of it, namely a man-of-war's launch with a middy and twelve hands in her, all as fast as tops, and as hard to be waked up as Dr. Watts's sluggard. Luckily there was oceans of cold pig at hand, and didn't we give it them, as Dibdin says, with the gravy, which at last brought them to their senses, when it appeared that hearing so much talk about opium, and finding a package of it adrift, they had chawed a little out of curiosity, which being an overdose had sent them all into the land of Nod. On comparing notes they had been drifted about three whole days and nights in the arms of Morfius. We got some capital yarns out of them, telling their dreams, turn and turn about, and the middy's was, that he had been down in Bedfordshire a week of wet Sundays, and dozing all the time as fast as a church in the family pew.

Poor fellows! it was lucky we picked them up, before falling into the power of the pigtails instead

of the ninetails—for they had two dozen a piece on rejoining their ship, but one of them, an old deep file, took another dose of the opium beforehand, and so was flogged in his sleep, they say, without feeling it, which if true, beats somambulism by long chalks.

Well, the next morning the watch reported that the ship was surrounded with floating spars and timbers, some being black and charred, from which we concluded either that some ship had been accidentally burnt and blown up, or else that hostilities had begun with the Chinese, and which proved to be the fact. One of our gun-brigs had had a brush the day before with a fleet of mandarin boats, and of course beat them into fits in no time; but with consequences rather inconvenient to the winners. You know we have in the river Thames a floating Chapel and a floating Infirmary, but what do you think of a floating Foundling Hospital?

However it's fact: and here's the way of it, up and down. The Chinese towns are very populous, so much so that there isn't room for half the inhabitants on dry land, and accordingly hundreds and thousands of families live, where *you* wouldn't, namely on the water, in regular swimming houses, with no ground-floors. This arrangement of course prevents the rising generation from playing as ours

does about the streets, so they play about the deck instead, which being wet and slippery it often happens that some of them, especially what you call the little toddles, plump overboard, and would be drowned but for a great empty calibash that their mothers tie to their backs, and which acting like a cork jacket keeps the dear little ducklings afloat, till their industrious parents are at leisure to haul them out with a long boat-hook. An operation they never hurry themselves about, knowing the darlings are perfectly safe; as well as doing their own washing, while the young uns from the same sense of security are far from particular about their footing, but drop in and float about as if they were paid for doing it, like the aquatic actors at Sadler's Wells.

Well, you see when the mandarin boats bore down on the gun-brig she began to fire away like blazes, right and left, and one or two of the random balls falling among the floating houses, the proprietors considered it as a notice to quit, and away they went helter skelter—*sove qui peu,* which is the French for devil take the hindmost, some up the river and some into the canals,—whole. Water Lanes and River Terraces moving off in double quick, with such screaming and howling, they say, as never was heard. In such a skurry the juveniles

got knocked overboard like fun, some of the unpleasant or snubbed children in large families perhaps getting a kick on purpose, however in they went, plump after plump, like frogs frightened into a pond,—the brig all the while kicking up a regular smother, and chattering away like thunder as long as she could get an answer, and rather longer. At last she stopped firing, and the smoke clearing off, lo and behold there was not a mandarin boat in sight—the swimming-town had gone into the country, and all round the ship the sea was alive with little Chineses brought down by the ebb tide, all floating about with their life-preservers, and screaming like sea-gulls for their absent fathers and mothers.

As common humanity required, they were all picked up and taken aboard the brig, one hundred and sixty-four in all, from a year upwards, and after a little warm grog apiece, which some took naturally and others quite the reverse, the captain sent them all off in the gig and the cutter, with a white ensign to each boat. Not that the Chinese would mind firing on a flag of truce, which they did so unmercifully that the officers in charge out of humanity gave orders to pull round, and brought all the little innocents aboard again, as well as some six or seven more which they had

picked up in their passage. Well, when Captain —— saw them all come back on his hands, he looked at them, they say, like an ogre, for he thought the barbarians had contrived it on purpose, to prevent his fighting his ship, and he swore, so soon as the flood made, he would heave the brats overboard every cherub, and let them tide back again. But when the time come, being a family man himself, his heart always misgave,—so the children remained aboard,—and there was Her Majesty's gunbrig the —— turned into a regular Foundling Hospital.

By good luck our commander took me with him on a visit to the brig, and sure enough she was literally swarming with little flat-faced Chinese, some put to bed 3 and 4 in a hammock, and the rest sprawling about the decks, each looked after by a strapping he-nursemaid six foot high,—the carpenter's nurseling excepted, which being called off to a job he had tied by the leg to a ring bolt. And oh, thinks I, if my dear motherly mother could but see the boatswain;—a great red-faced monster, almost as hairy as the beast that suckled Romulus and Romus, a sitting on a carronade, with a brown foundling on each knee, one getting up a squall and the other sick, from being tried with a soft quid of tobacco, because it couldn't manage hard

biscuit! And then the noise!—for at least half of the children were screeching like parakeets, I don't think for want of toys, for one had a marlinspike, and another the tarbrush, and another an old swab, but by degrees the whole kit of innocents on deck had set up their pipes as if King Herod had got among them,—and nobody knew why. Some thought it was at the black cook, and others said the Newfoundland dog—however the secret came out at last.

"Forward there!" sings out the first leftenant, "what is that noise?"

"Why then, if you please, sir," says the coxon, "it's all along of the ship's monkey. He's got so infarnal jealous of our nussin and fondlin the Chinee babbies, that he's crept round on the sly and give 'em all a bite apiece!"

What became of the interesting Foundlings afterwards, I don't know to a certainty, our ship being ordered off the same day to proceed up the river; but somebody said, that the captain exchanged the whole boiling for the Newfoundland dog, which had somehow been inveigled on shore by the Chinese.

As yet our ship had never fired a gun except by way of salute. In going up the river, a few shot had been aimed at us which our commander wouldn't condescend to answer. Our fellows have indeed

the greatest contempt for the Chinese batteries, which they call their *piany forts.* At last we got liberty to return their compliments, and I determined to have a shy at the pigtails, so I had a gun run out forward, took aim at a Joss-house, and fired it off with my own hand,—bang! whiz! and away flew the ball howling through the air. Where it went or what mischief it did I have no notion; but after watching a minute the captain sings out,

"Who laid that gun?"

"I did, sir," was my reply.

"Mr. Budge," says he, "you will be a shining character."

"I hope, sir, I shall."

None of us have yet been allowed to land, but we hope soon to have a spree on shore. Some of the fellows in the gun-brig have been into the country and had a famous lark. Such cockshying at the China jars! Such chevying after the natives for their tails! and finishing off with a row in a Joss-house, which they set fire to, after dragging out the Idol, a regular old Guy, and running him up, Jack Ketch fashion, to the bough of a tree. If that does not convert the pagans I don't know what will!

Some day I suppose it will be our turn to have a set-to with the war junks, or an army battle ashore,

in which case unless he gets knocked into the Tiger's Mouth, or is chopped in two by a two-handed sword, or has a wriggle like an eel, on an ugly sort of three-pronged spear, there is a chance of Mr. Gustavus covering himself with glory, as well as coming in for part of the swag. One of the middies of the gun-brig told me, that he had for his own share fourteen tails, three pair of chop-sticks, a beautiful ivory fan, carved as delicate as Brussels lace, two rattan shields, a fighting quail, three odd women's shoes, a state parasol, and a superb lantern! No bad lot, and says you wouldn't the lantern look well in our passage at home, I should say Hall, and lighted up with gas.

In the mean time our jacks and jollies are full of the best spirit, and only want a chance to slaughter the Chinamen like pigs. And sarve 'em right, they say, for calling Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria a Barbarian Eye—besides which, they have a notion of their own, that the war is intended to force the Chinese to smoke and chew 'backy instead of opium, and therefore a very just and legitimate business, and even of a friendly character. Be that as it may the natives do not seem to relish the sport. It's a very good game as the hoop said to the stick, only I get all the licks.

But it is time to belay. Tell uncle Abel, with

my duty to him, he may cut off his queue as soon as he likes, for I'll send him one six times as thick, and twelve times as long, if I kill a mandarin on purpose. Likewise a *Swan-pan*, being quite in his line. Cousin Rouzel may depend on a *Tung-lo* to charm his bees with; and Susan shall have a pair of ladies' shoes almost too small for this world. As for yourself, you would not object I dare say to a *Pow-ka*—some of the swell mandarins by the way are first chop dandies, with splendid satin pelisses and silk petticoats that would make up easily into gowns—a *Chin-tow* of course, and maybe you would like a *Kang*. You have only to say which you would prefer, and it shall come by the first ship and no mistake. I should like to see you in a *Kew!*

With love and duty to yourself, and remembrances to all friends and relatives,

I am,

Dear Mother,

Your affectionate Son,

AUGUSTUS BUDGE.

P.S.—Since the above a native-boat has come alongside and I've done a little barter. One of my rings for a fishing cormorant, and the amethyst brooch for a regular game cricket.

NO. III.

TO MRS. BUDGE, WISBECH.

DEAR SISTER,—This is to acnollige your faver of the 13th currant includin one from my Nevy. And am sorry to observe he have put no Date to it which is neglectin what I call one of the three correspondin W's,—namely When Where and What.

As for you and me difering its what we always did and always shall do like the 2 sides of an Account. Becos why whatever you place to Credit on one Side I set down Per Contra. For exampel what you call propper spirit I call impudence and what you considder generosity I consider extravigance. Thats how we don't ballance. Time will show whose Itums was the correctest, yours or Some Peoples, a Firm I Know as well as if their Names & Addresses was in the Directry & not many doors off from my own. But its early days to say Im no Profit afore knowing more of the returns And for all that apears as yet you may have a bad Speck in your Sun.

As such I am sorry to hear of your Sellin out Stock & narrowin your Incum, partickly as it was under 150 afore, & so no savin as to the Tax.

Also your pinchin Yourself in Your vittles, & in course narrowin your Figger in that way too, which is more then I would for any dear Gus in the world. But as you say I cant feel like a Muther, & am glad I cant. I am neither so soft in the Hed nor so tender brested, like the Pellican you rite of & which I take it must be some sort of forin Goose, to go Shylockin a pound of flesh from my own buzum to satisfy extravigant bills. And that such is the case is proved by your own Entries as to uniforms and trinkits and so forth, whereby my thirty Pound have gone it appears for Dux and Drakes instead of buying his Sextons and Squad rons and other nortical Instruments. What bisness has a yung fellow jist startin in life with little desideratums? There was no such things in my time—no nor bullocks trunks nayther, ony elefants. So in course thats a sham entry. Praps insted of a goold snuff box to match his repeter. Or praps for a dandifide sute of Close, to wear turn about with his uniform, for the last time I had the pleasure, my Nevy reminded me a good deal of a Monky. Which reminds me if you want his picter in his absence, there's the very moral of him, in old Snitch's the tailer's winder, drawn and cullerd at full lenth, as a sample of the last ally mode. I mean the one a switching a little refined lickerish

boot, as no man with a grate Toe could get his foot into. He's the very immage! Now in *my* yunger days a respectabel yuth was content with a decent coat and hat, and provided he could go into church with a clean shirt, well blackt Boots, and a pair of unholy gloves. But them was plain Johns, not dear Gusses. As to his goold Watch its like his impudence when his Uncle have gone thro life with a Pinch back—and whats more never had a Watch at all till five an twenty. The Cock was my Crow-nometer. Four in summer and six in winter from years end to years end. But I supose erly risin was none of my Nevy's habbits and till 12 or 1 he would have been letting himself down by getting up. The later the genteeler,—and I have herd of one fashonable religius lady in Lonnon who always got up singing the Evening Hym. However thats your way of bringin up, namely to give a sun his own way in every thing, which being a very take it esy stile of edicating to my mind hardly justifies a Parent in bragging of it so much as she do in your letter. It would have been better praps to have thwarted a little more, for all his lively parts. My flebit Horse in the Spring cart is much such a Genus, with a remarkable tallent for Kickin, and not unclever at backin, and an uncommon quickness at running away. But I dont

give him his Hed for all that. He would soon be distributing orders at rong doors if I did. But says you dear Gus isn't ment for a plodding tradesman. He's to be a shining caracter, as to which it seam to me, from the letter, my Nevy's cannon bullet went nowheres watever, and the Captin only intended to say he'd be such a shining caracter as a mackrel, when its good for nuthing.

As to his Corrispondance, not having your advantige of a bording Skool edication, I am no judge of stiles, how genuses ort to rite or not, but it do seem to me, from my own pickings up about the streets that he have much the same flashes of Fancy as the littel dirty ragged genuses that inquire arter strange gentlemens muthers, and if so be they have parted with their mangles. Still to give the Devil his do, as the saying is, there is parts of his letter not so much amiss. The Yellow See reads almost like filosofy—and the Opuim bisness sounds correct, and so does the Chiney Orfins, tho I cant weep over them being as you say a Batcheler, and therefor all the children I havent got are to be chuckt in my teeth. The same of your own pictur of yourself which not being a Femal I cant fancy myself into, any more than you can fancy yourself into my inwizible green and drab shorts. All I can say is I hope I may live to see it, Lantern

and all, and dear Gus a ridin arter you on an Elefant, like a nabob, or a Mandarin, which reminds of his libberty taken with my tie. As to cuttin it off praps I may, *to leave as a legacy.* In the mean while he may keep his Shan Pan to fry his own fish in. If he had been reely solicitus to please, a pair of them noddin figures, such as stands in some grocer's shop winders, would have been a more likely and nateral present.

I think now I have answered every pint in your faver: and have only one thing to add namely trade is dredful flat, and money uncommon scarse and tight every where, which I mention in case that you or my Nevy may not look to me for the needful in any dilemmy as is far from unprobable. I have no more thirty pounds to give away: and as to lendin on lone, of course it will be expected without sekurity from a Nateral Unkle, wheras the Unnateral ones always gets something or other if its ony a flat irun for their advances.

With which I remane

Dear Sister

Your loving Bruther,

ABEL DOTTIN.

Manchester, . .
October the 26th, 1842.

NO. IV.

TO MR. ABEL DOTTIN, GROCER, MANCHESTER.

DEAR BROTHER,—A violent cold having flown to my chest, I am too ill to enjoy retorting and retaliating, and which must plead my apology for not recriminating at more length. As such you must excuse my not resenting sereatim every point in your last letter, and making you thoroughly ashamed of yourself and your unnatural sentiments. I allude particularly to your taking refuge as an Uncle in the character of a Pawnbroker, and declining loans to your nearest ties, except on the usual sharking terms of those moral monsters. But trade hardens every thing. It teaches to adulterate our genuine feelings with sordid ingredients, and to weigh the just claims of consanguity in scales that are any thing but correct.

Gracious heavens! where *is* a sister or a nevy to look up to for assistance if needful, but to a rich connexion without chick or child, rolling in wealth; and where I venture to say, every shilling he advances will be to his everlasting credit! O, brother, consider your nevy's propinquity! Your sister's own son—and if ever a youth exhibited a decided propensity to get elevated, its him. I do

hope, therefore, you will reflect before you shirk one so likely to redound upon you as dear Gus. Already by his native genius, improved by talent, he has arrived at a pitch of splendour to which few sons rise in the East; and of course the greater his eminence and prosperity, the more he will reflect on his relations. To be sure, if a nevy was going down in the world instead of up, some people might feel justified in backing him with a cold shoulder; but where he promises wealth, affluence, and opulence, rank, title, and dignity, to cut one's own flesh and blood must be perfect infatuation! And suppose a little pecunery assistance *was* necessary to his exaltation, ought the laudible heights of his ambition to be chilled and snowed upon by a cold calculating passimony, and let him be arrested on the high-road to fame and fortune, for want of a trifle, as I may say, to pay the gates? What's a paltry 50*l.* for such a figure in China! And that dear Gus has turned out a phenomena, is plain from his own account. So great a rise in life of course demands a corresponding study of appearances,—but as transpires, poor fellow, from his letter, he has lost all his linnen and clothes. Such a misfortune must and shall be remedied, whatsoever shifts I may have to make, or if I strip myself to my last dividend. For I presume even *you*

would not wish your nevy to be a General without a shirt, or a Colonel without inexpressibles, and especially when he has attracted, as I may say, the Eyes of Europe. A nevy who may some day have to be sculptured, collossially, and set up on a prancing charging horse, over a triumphant arch.

But some people may treat such a picture as chimerical, though quite as wonderful metamorphoses have come down to us. Look at Boneyparte, who at first was only an engineer officer, like Mr. Braidwood, and yet came to be Emperor of the French. Or look at Washington, who from a common American soldier rose to be king of the whole republic! For my own part I will say for my son, it as been my constant aim to instil genius into him, morning, noon, and night, and to cultivate a genteel turn for either the army, or the navy, or the church. The last, I own, would have been most congenial to my maternal wishes, for besides the safety of a pulpit, a soldier or a sailor when peace comes is a moral non-entity, but there is no peace in the church. However dear Gus would never hear of a shovel hat and a silk apron, and especially at the present time, when, as I understand, the clergy is to go back to their ancient, antiquated costume, and put on their old-fashioned rubrics. As to the law he never could abide a chan-

cellor's wig and gown, and indeed always showed a perfect antipathy to anything legal. So far, then, the Chinese war was a blessing, and all has turned out for the best; for dear Gus has attained to martial glory, quite unusual at his age, and if a parent may predict, will some day be made a peer of, like Wellington, and hand himself down to posterity with his family arms.

In the mean time I have packed up for him a dozen ready-made shirts, together with such money as I could scrape up, namely four sovereigns, a sum, alas! which will fall far short of his Pekin expectations, and certainly not enough to let him see any great capital. In fact he names fifty pounds as the very smallest minimum for supporting the honour of his country at the Chinese court, and which most people will consider as very moderate terms. I do hope, therefore, when such a trifle is in the case and so much at stake, you will kindly contrive to make it up, or if cash is inconvenient, by an accommodation bill or a creditable letter to some banking-house abroad. As to security, my own U. O. I. would, I trust, be sufficient between relatives, or if you preferr'd, dear Gus would no doubt be agreeable to your taking out the amount in tea or Chinese fans, or nid-noddin mandarins, or any other articles you might fancy. In which

case you *can* be no loser, but will enjoy the satisfaction of putting forward a shining branch that will greatly add to our family lustre.

How he escaped from such awful Waterloo work as he describes is a perfect miracle. The mere perusal almost turned my whole mass of blood, and made me feel as if poked and stabbed in every fibre, and squibbed and rocketted besides. Indeed war seems from his picture, to be a combination of storm, total eclipse, the great earthquake that should have been, and the fifth of November. It follows that dear Gus must have been specially preserved from such a concatenation for some brilliant destiny, which it would be a sin in us to frustrate by any scrimp measures. I do beg and hope, therefore, to hear from you with the needful, by return of post, in which case I remain, dear Brother,

Your affectionate sister,

JEMIMA BUDGE.

Wisbech, 17th November, 1842.

NO. V.

DEAR MOTHER,—As I expected in my last, I have at length set foot in the Chinese empire, and am at this moment writing from Chew-shew, a regular Celestial village, though not to be found

perhaps on the Celestial globe. However, it is a pleasant place enough, and would be pleasanter if our quartermaster had not quartered me with a wholesale breeder of black beetles, for a great Soy manufactury in the neighbourhood—a hint which I suppose will set your face and stomach for the future against that soy-disant sauce. However, here is the process from the Chinese receipt. First fatten your beetles on as much pounded rice as they will eat. Then mash the insects to a paste, which must be slowly boiled in a strong decoction of Spanish liquorice. Strain the liquor carefully, and bottle it, well corked, for English use.

Since my last we have had several brushes with the natives, whose first attempt was to make a bonfire of us in the river, having agreed to a truce for the purpose. In fact a regular gunpowder plot; but such traitors are sure to split amongst themselves, and one of them gave our commander the office the day before. At first the report was treated as a bam. However, after dark, as soon as the tide turned, down came the fire-raft with the ebb, and if the pigtails had been content with a business-like flare-up of combustibles and destructibles, might have played old gooseberry with our ship. But the Chinese are famous for their pirotechnics, in which they take the shine out of

Madame Hengler herself, so their vanity could not resist a little show off in the fancy line, to accompany their infernal machine. Accordingly, instead of the raft drifting quietly down on us, with a length of slow-match proportioned to the distance, we were warned of it two miles off by a shower of outlandish squibbs and crackers and serpents, cutting away in all directions, and then forming themselves into Chinese characters, one of them standing, as the pilot told us, for a certain very hot place. Of course we soon shifted our birth, and let the fire-raft drive clear of us, which soon after blew up in the shape of a great firey dragon, with a blazing tail twisting to a point like a red-hot corkscrew, and spitting a volley of blue zigzaggy lightning darting out of its mouth. It was a splendid sight, beating the grand Vauxhall finales, or the Surrey Zoological, all to sticks—and except in one little accident a very satisfactory performance.

In the hurry of shifting the ship, the Chinese wash-boats that were fastened astern of her were all cut adrift, and getting entangled with the fire-raft, our damp linen was terribly over-aired. Being the first wash after the voyage from England, my whole stock, unfortunately, was in the tub—shirts, trowsers, stockings, in short, every thing—so that what I am to do for a change I know not, unless I

can turn my blanket into a flannel waistcoat, and my sheets into a pair of ducks. A queer sort of toggery to exhibit in to the Brother of the Sun and Moon and the Imperial Family at Pekin. To be sure I have since obtained a few laurels, and if they were real ones might go to court as a Jack in the Green—but no, the thing is beyond a joke, and I do hope that on the receipt of this my dear mother will immediately forward a dozen shirts (fine ones mind) to her dear Gus. For trowsers, the climate being warm, I can perhaps make shift, *à la* Highlander, but the shirts are indispensable, and may be sent to the care of John Shearing, Esquire, Star Coffee-house, Drury-lane, who is coming out with the first reinforcements and supplies.

Having mentioned my laurels, you will naturally wish to know where they were picked. After the fire-raft business, our commanders resolved in a council of war, to waste no more time in chaffing, but to commence uncivil operations, and do the offensive. So we were all disembarked, soldiers, sailors, and marines, and after a skirmish or two, brought the enemy to a regular stand-up fight, at a place called Kow-Tan. They were in great force, and opened a smart fire on us from their matchlocks and field artillery, which are small swivels fastened on camel's backs, but are frequently so

overloaded, that the recoil tears off the poor animal's hump. On our side we had lots of howitzers that kept shelling out their bombs and grapnells like fun.

Our right was composed of the marines, and our centre of the regulars, but we had no left at all on account of a swamp. The sailors were the reserve, only, as usual, they would not reserve themselves, but ran off helter skelter to a Chinese castle, which they took by boarding. In the mean time Captain Pidding got possession of a tea-grove towards Howqua, while Twining's company captured a magazine containing about 20,000 pounds of fine gunpowder, and immediately opened a discharge of canisters, that made regular Mincing-lanes through the main body of the Teatollers. My own post was with a cloud of skirmishers that was pushed forward to enfilade our artillery, while it made a reconnoisance—but I do not pretend to describe all the manœuvres of our army, like the moves at a game of chess. Some eye-witnesses, I know, profess to have seen every thing in an action, right and left, back and front, and in the middle, as clear as the figures of a quadrille, but which is very different to my notion and experience of a battle. To my mind it is more like a turn-up in London, where you are too much engaged with your own customers

to attend to what goes on over the way, or at the other end of the street,—not to forget the dust and smother, for the guns and cannons, as yet, are not obliged by Act of Parliament to consume their own smoke. To give a clear idea of it, just fancy yourself in a London fog, so thick that you can only see your two next files. Well, by and by, the right-hand one, after cutting an extraordinary caper, suddenly drops and rolls out of sight into the fog, and when you look rather anxiously for your left-hand man, you see Tom Brown instead of Jack Robinson. The next minute you throw a summerset yourself over a log or a dead corporal, you cannot see which, and then plunge with your head into the big drum, or perhaps on a dismounted cannon, with a crash that makes you see all the gaslights in London in one focus. Of course, you're insensible for a bit, till your refreshed with a kick or a stab, and then you revive again, about as cool and collected as a gentleman waking suddenly, at midnight, to a storm of thunder and lightning, a smother of smoke, a strong smell of fire, and a burglar or two at his bedside. All you see distinctly is some sort of bright picked-pointed instrument within an inch of your eye, which of course you parry off by natural instinct, and then going to work at random, cut and thrust

right and left with your sword, or pike, or bayonet into the darkness visible, which goes into something soft, and comes back red and dripping. That's to say, if you have good luck: if not, you get a slash or a poke yourself, from some person or persons unknown, in your throat, or your chest, or your stomach, or wherever you like. However, for this once you win first blood—so on you go groping, stumbling, poking, parrying, and coughing, when you've time for it, and winking if you can't help it, the flashes increasing like blazes, the smother getting thicker and thicker, and the noise louder and louder,—so that you don't know you've been cheering except by getting hoarse and short of wind. No matter, on you push, or are pushed, into the cloud, till at last you dimly see a sort of Ombre Shinois dodging before you, that suddenly turns to a real Tartar, painted and dressed up to look like a Bengal Tiger, and flourishing a great double-edged sword in each of his fore-paws. Of course it's kill or be killed, so at it you go, like Carter and his wild beasts, only in right down earnest, two or three more Tigers joining in, clash slash, and the sparks flying as thick as in a smith's forge, or at a Terrific Combat at the Surrey or the Wells. Such a shindy is too hot to last, and, accordingly, if you're alive at the end of two jiffies, the chance is that you find yourself making quite

a melodramatic Tableau — namely, your bloody sword in one hand, a Chinese pigtail in the other, and four or five weltering Tartars lying round your feet!

What followed I hardly know, my head seeming to spin like Harlequin's; but I am told that I performed prodigies of pluck, and which, if you do not read of in the dispatches, must be laid to the envy and jealousy of our Top Sawyers and the Commander-in-chief.

The pigtails, to do the handsome, behaved with great coolness, many of them fanning themselves with their great fans in the heat of the action. But, as usual, European tactics prevailed over want of discipline; and the barbarians having both their wings broken were obliged to fly. The slaughter was prodigious—our mortars playing like bricks, and the flying artillery dropping their tumbrils with beautiful precision into the thick of the mob. The sword and bayonet, as we may suppose, were not idle, but indulged in lots of "sticks and strikes," as Miss Martineau says, at the expense of the Chinese, and turned a great many of their flanks. The swag is immense: including the enemy's military chest, and the key of their position, which is of solid gold, and first-rate workmanship, and is to be sent home to England for presentation to the Queen.

The loss on the English side was trifling; only one man belonging to our ship being killed,—a London Billsticker who had volunteered with the Expedition, to get a sight, as he said, of the great Chinese Wall.

Well, after the battle was over, we turned, as the song says, from Lions into Lambs, sparing all such as made signs for quarter, only marking them, by cutting off their tails, as being under British protection. A good many of the natives were also chevied after, and humanely hunted back to their homes, though some of our fellows, it must be owned, preferred breaking into the villas and Joss-houses in search of the silver, and got plenty of tin, besides Poo-Choos, Joo-ees, and the like. Mister Augustus for his share only getting a fiddling little Ye-Yin, *alias* a Kit. The truth is, I was too much interested in going after a poor little stray Chinese. From the marks, it was evidently very young, and unaccompanied, and the mere idea of a lost child in such a vast empire as China, would have engaged the commonest humanity in the task; the country, besides being full of swamps and canals, and hundreds of uncovered wells, into which, in its headlong terror, it might plunge. My heart turned sick at the very thought, and made me the more eager to overtake the youngster, while fancy painted the delightful scene of restoring

it uninjured to its distracted parents. But fear had lent wings to the little feet which I tracked, with Indian-like perseverance, by the prints in the mud and sand,—on, and on, and on, but alas! without a glimpse of the fugitive. Scared by the thunder of our artillery, it had probably flown for miles, and I had almost given up all hope, when the trail, as Cooper calls it, led me to the edge of a paddy-ground (or rice-field), where I caught sight of something crouching down amongst the herbage. You may guess with what eagerness I dashed in and made a grab at her blue-satin, when, suddenly jumping up to bolt, the poor child turned out to be her own mother, or at least a full-sized China-woman, but with the little tiny feet of an English two-year-old. Still, being a female in distress, I tried to comfort and encourage her—no easy job for a foreign Barbarian, as black as a sweep with gunpowder, as ragged as a beggar with slashing and fencing, and jabbering all his compliments and consolations in an unknown tongue. So as chaffing was of no use, I was compelled to active measures—but the more I tried to save her the more the little catty package clawed me with what I can only compare to human tenpenny nails. However, I made shift to carry her off to the nearest house, which proved to be either her own or a friend's; for she flung herself into the arms

of a fat elderly Chinaman, who met us at the door. The old fellow, whether husband or father, was very civil, and seemed to twig my motives much better than the lady: for after a little telegraphing, he politely set before me a regular Chinese feast, namely a saucer full of candied garden-worms, a cold boiled bird's nest, and a basin of addled eggs, making signs besides, that if I would wait for one being killed, I should have a dish of dead dog. All being intended on his part to do the handsome and the grateful in return for my services—but which, as virtue is its own reward, I declined.

Our victory at Kow-Tan, it is thought, will end the war, so that before you are much older, you may look, my dear mother, to see

Your affectionate son,

AUGUSTUS BUDGE.

P.S.—I re-open my letter to say that a Treaty of Peace has been signed at Nankin. It remains to be seen whether the English nation will be satisfied with the terms, but they were the best we could get—namely, the Chinese are all to turn Christians, and to pay off our National Debt. Of course there will be Illuminations in London, and at Pekin there is to be a grand Feast of Lanterns, to which the Emperor has invited our Commander-in-chief, with such officers as he may name; and

I am proud and happy to say I am set down rather high in the list. So to say nothing of promotion at home, which may be booked, I am sure of something handsome from the Brother of the Sun and Moon, who, like those celestial relatives, is famous for tipping with gold and silver. But a little of the ready, say fifty pounds at the very lowest, will be absolutely needful in the mean time, if I am to keep up my rank at the Chinese Court. In such a case I know *you* will grudge nothing, and perhaps Uncle Abel will come down, in whole or in part. *But pray do remember that the money must be had*, and may be forwarded through the same channel as the shirts.

NO. VI.

TO MRS. BUDGE, WISBECH.

DEAR SISTER,—Your last of the 17 Instant came duly to hand And am sorry to note you are too poorly for illfeeling, which in course I can excuse. In such a case being loath to agrivate, shall confine myself to Matters of Facts which being unanserable will save you the troubble of a Reply.—Otherwise I should have considdered my deuty to set you to rites and partickly on the subjex of Trade and Tradesmen and their adulteratin and use of short waits. As to which a honest man,

altho he is a grocer, may be a fare dealer and have as nice senses of honners in his trade, as a Lord or a Duke who has no Bisness whatever in the world. Thats my feeling, and on my own private Account beg to say so fur from aproving of fraudulent Practices if so be I thought my Skales was cheatin I would kick the beam. Concerning which I may remark that some people who considder themselves Gentry such as Bankers toppin Merchants and the like contrive to have false Ballances without any Skales at all. So much for your flings at trade tho I do not care a fig, nor even a whole Drum of them for sich reflections. Praps if my Nevy had been put early in life to the same Bisness he mite by this time have been rollin in Welth as well as his Uncle, which however I ant. The times is too up hill and money too scarse for any sich opperation. But at any rate he mite have reallized a little Mint instead of his Sprigs of Lawril of which I advise to inquire the vally at Common Garden. But that comes of your genteel notions of a polite bringin up and which nothin would satisfy more humbler than a Lord Chancellor, or a Bishop, or a Field Marshal. In my yunger days the sons of limmitted Widders with narrer incums had no sich capital choices, or my own Muther would certanely have pre-

ferred me in a silk apon to a dowlus, and a clericle shovel hat to a shockin bad un with the brim turned up all round. Not to name a military hat on full cock and very full fledged with fethers. Also a fine scarlet or blew uniform with goold lace down my unexpressibles, in loo of a pair of cordray Shorts meant for longs, as well as shabby, with a scrimp Jacket that praps objected to meet them on that account. As for linnin, its enuff to say my muther hardly thort it worth markin, and never numbered it all. As regards which its my opinion if you ever see dear Gus again you are more likely to see a shirt without a General than a General without a shurt. But its the prevailing fashion nowadays for every Boddy to aspire above their stashuns, or at any rate to pass off their humbleness under some high flown name. For exampel John Burril of our place, who I overheard the other day calling himself the Architect of his own fortune, and he's only a little Bilder.

But as I said above I am not going pint by pint through your faver, but to convey certain perticlurs as follows. When I received yours of said date I was jist on the eve of startin off by the railway on urgent business to the metropulis. So I had only time to put your letter in my pockit-book, which will explane my anser-

ing it from this place, namely the Gorge and Vulture, High Holborn—N.B. and prepaid beforehand. Being seven year since my last visit to London and my first regular holliday, it appeared not altogether incumpatible to treat myself for once to the play, which was Theatre Royal Drury Lane, at three shillings ahead to the pit, the front row next the Musick. The peace was King John, another exampel you will say of a hard harted Uncle and a neglected Nevy, and as such a theatricle slap in somebody's face. But beggin pardon it seems to me that the account between such relashuuships have never been correctly stated nor the claims of the junior party fairly made out. A Father is a father with his own consent and concurrants and therefore only responsibel as I may say for his own Acceptance—but an Uncle is made such willy nilly whether he's agreeable or not, as is partickly hard on a single Batcheler who not wanting children at all, is obligated to have them at second hand in the shapes of Nevies and Neeces. As such I could not help simperthisin with King John, with a plaguy Nevy of a prince Arthur, and an unreasonable Muther, always harping like somebody else on her son, her son, her son, and to be sure when she did kick up a dust it was a hot one, like ground pepper and ginger! How-

ever the second act being over, I stud up and looked round, as usual, to have a survey of the House and the company when lo and behold whom should I see about three rows off in the pit, whom but dear Gus himself!—your preshus Son and my identical Nevy,—who ought by rites at that very moment to have been at Canton in Chiney! What I said or did in my surprise I don't know, but the hole House, Boxes Pit and Gallery, bust out in a loud roar of horse lauffing which to my humble capacity was anything but a propper display of feelin at such juvenile depravity. However I scrambled over the Benshes without ceremunny and had well nigh apprehendid him when a genteel blaggard thumpt down my bran new bever right over my bridge of my Nose and afore I could get it up agin, both scoundrils includin dear Gus had made off. Still I mite praps have ketchd him except for a new Police but more like an old Fool, who insistid on detainin me to know my particklers of my Loss. Why then says I it's 30 pound, a new hat and a nevy, but as he had seen none of them took he declined to interfere. I mite have added to my minuses the best part of the Play, which of course I could not set out but returned to the Gorge and Vulter to engage a sleepless bed for the night. But not being bed time I set down to anser your faver, on

referring to which put me in mind to inquire of his frend sum Reprobate of course at the Coffee-shop in Drury Lane and the same being handy instead of the letter I posted off myself and asked if Mr. Shearing was known at the House. Which he was. So I was showed into the Coffee-room, into a privit box and sure enuf there he were—not his frend but himself, having only used the other name for an Alibi.

However there he were, with a siggar in his mouth and a glass of Negus afore him which I indignently

drunk up myself and then demandid an account of his misconduct, Errers not Excepted. Which he give. So the long and the short is he made a full Confession whereby it apears insted of goin abroad he was never out of London at least not further then Hide Park Corner to a Chinees Exibition and where he pickt up his confounded Long Tungs and Slang Wangs and Swan Pans and every attum he knows of them infurnal Celestials.

As mite be expected his Cash including my £30 was all squandered mostly I suppose for bottles of wine and smoke,—and such little desideratums. His goold watch went a month ago—and the bullocks trunks as I predicted grew out of his own Head. So much for a shinin caracter and a Genus above the common. As such you will soon have dear Gus on your own hands agin, at Wisbech, where if Uncles may advise as well as contribit he will be placed with some steddy tradesman to lern a bisness. Unless praps you prefer him to have an Appintment in the next Expedition to Bottany Bay. With which I remain, dear Sister,

Your loving Brother.

ABEL DOTTIN.

London. November the 28th, 1842.

P.S. I did hope to save the new Shurts out of the fire. But to use his own words they are Spouted and he have lost the Ticket.

NEW HARMONY.

"I 'll have five hundred voices of that sound."—CORIOLANUS.

A few days since, while passing along the Strand, near Exeter Hall, my ear was suddenly startled by a burst of sound from the interior of that building:—a noise which, according to a bystander, proceeded from the "calling out of the Vocal Militia."

HULLAH-BALOO.

This explanation rather exciting than allaying my curiosity, induced me to make further inquiries into the matter; when it appeared that the Educational Committee had built a plan, on a German

foundation, for the instruction of the middle and lower orders in Music, and that a Mr. Hullah was then engaged in drilling one of the classes in singing.

As an advocate for the innocent amusement of the lower classes, and the people in general, the news gave me no small pleasure; and even the distant chorus gratified my ear more than a critical organ ought to have been pleased by the imperfect blending of a number of unpractised voices of very various qualities, and as yet not quite so tuneable as the hounds of Theseus in giving tongue. Indeed, one or two voices seemed also to be "out of their time" in the very beginning of their apprenticeship. But to a patriotic mind, there was a moral sweetness in the music that fully atoned for any vocal irregularities, and would have reconciled me even to an orchestra of Dutch Nightingales. To explain this feeling, it must be remembered that no Administration but one which intended to be popular and paternal, would ever think of thus encouraging the exercise of the Vox Populi; and especially of teaching the million to lift up their voices *in concert*, for want of which, and through discordances amongst themselves, their political choruses have hitherto been so ineffective. It was evident, therefore, that our Rulers seriously intended, not merely to imbue the people with musical knowledge, but also to give them good cause to sing,—and of

course, hoped to lend their own ministerial ears to songs and ballads very different from the satirical *chansons* that are chanted on the other side of the English Channel. In short, we were all to be as merry and as tuneful as Larks, and to enjoy a Political and a Musical Millenium !

This idea so transported me, that like a gratefu canary I incontinently burst into a full-throated song, and with such thrills and flourishes as recurred to me, commenced a Bravura, which in a few minutes might have attracted an audience more numerous than select, if my performance had not been checked in its very preludium by an occurrence peculiarly characteristic of a London street. It was, in fact, the abrupt putting to me of a question, which some pert cockney of the Poultry first addressed to the unfledged.

"DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW YOU'RE OUT?"

ETCHING MORALIZED.

TO A NOBLE LADY.

"To point a moral."—JOHNSON.

FAIREST Lady and Noble, for once on a time,
Condescend to accept, in the humblest of rhyme,
And a style more of Gay than of Milton,
A few opportune verses design'd to impart
Some didactical hints in a Needlework Art,
Not described by the Countess of Wilton.

An Art not unknown to the delicate hand
Of the fairest and first in this insular land,
But in Patronage Royal delighting;
And which now your own feminine fantasy wins,
Tho' it scarce seems a lady-like work that begins
In a *scratching* and ends in a *biting!*

Yet oh! that the dames of the Scandalous School
Would but use the same acid, and sharp-pointed tool,
That are plied in the said operations—
Oh! would that our Candours on copper would sketch!
For the first of all things in beginning to etch
Are—good *grounds* for our representations.

Those protective and delicate coatings of wax,
Which are meant to resist the corrosive attacks
That would ruin the copper completely;
Thin cerements which whoso remembers the Bee
So applauded by Watts, the divine LL.D.,
Will be careful to spread very neatly.

For why? like some intricate deed of the law,
Should the ground in the process be left with a flaw,
Aqua-fortis is far from a joker;
And attacking the part that no coating protects,
Will turn out as distressing to all your *effects*
As a landlord who puts in a broker.

Then carefully spread the conservative stuff,
Until all the bright metal is cover'd enough,
To repel a destructive so active;
For in Etching, as well as in Morals, pray note
That a little raw spot, or a hole in a coat,
Your ascetics find vastly attractive.

Thus the ground being laid, very even and flat,
And then smoked with a taper, till black as a hat,
Still from future disasters to screen it,
Just allow me, by-way of precaution, to state,
You must hinder the footman from changing your
plate,
Nor yet suffer the butler to clean it.

Nay, the Housemaid, perchance, in her passion to
scrub,
May suppose the dull metal in want of a rub,
Like the Shield which Swift's readers remember—
Not to mention the chance of some other mishaps,
Such as having your copper made up into caps
To be worn on the First of September.

But aloof from all damage by Betty or John,
You secure the veil'd surface, and trace thereupon
The design you conceive the most proper:
Yet gently, and not with a needle too keen,
Lest it pierce to the wax through the paper between,
And of course play Old Scratch with the copper.

So in worldly affairs, the sharp-practising man
Is not always the one who succeeds in his plan,
Witness Shylock's judicial exposure;
Who, as keen as his knife, yet with agony found,
That while urging his *point* he was losing his *ground*,
And incurring a fatal disclosure.

But, perhaps, without tracing at all, you may choose
To indulge in some little extempore views,
Like the older artistical people;
For example, a Corydon playing his pipe,
In a Low Country marsh, with a Cow after Cuyp,
And a Goat skipping over a steeple.

A wild Deer at a rivulet taking a sup,
With a couple of Pillars put in to fill up,
  Like the columns of certain diurnals;
Or a very brisk sea, in a very stiff gale,
And a very Dutch boat, with a very big sail—
  Or a bevy of Retzsch's Infernals.

Architectural study—or rich Arabesque—
Allegorical dream—or a view picturesque,
  Near to Naples, or Venice, or Florence;
Or "as harmless as lambs and as gentle as
    doves,"
A sweet family cluster of plump little Loves,
  Like the Children by Reynolds or Lawrence..

But whatever the subject, your exquisite taste
Will ensure a design very charming and chaste,
  Like yourself, full of nature and beauty—
Yet besides the *good points* you already reveal,
You will need a few others—of well-temper'd steel,
  And especially form'd for the duty.

For suppose that the tool be imperfectly set,
Over many *weak lengths in your line* you will fret,
  Like a pupil of Walton and Cotton,
Who remains by the brink of the water, agape,
While the jack, trout, or barbel, effects its escape
  Thro' the gut or silk line being rotten.

Therefore let the steel point be set truly and round,
That the finest of strokes may be even and sound,
Flowing glibly where fancy would lead 'em.
But alas! for the needle that fetters the hand,
And forbids even sketches of Liberty's land
To be drawn with the requisite freedom!

Oh! the botches I've seen by a tool of the sort,
Rather hitching than etching, and making, in short,
Such stiff, crabbed, and angular scratches,
That the figures seem'd statues or mummies from tombs,
While the trees were as rigid as bundles of brooms,
And the herbage like bunches of matches!

The stiff clouds as if carefully iron'd and starch'd,
While a cast-iron bridge, meant for wooden, o'er-arch'd
Something more like a road than a river.
Prythee, who in such characteristics could see
Any trace of the beautiful land of the free—
The Free-Mason—Free-Trader—Free-Liver!

But prepared by a hand that is skilful and nice,
The fine point glides along like a skate on the ice,
At the will of the Gentle Designer,
Who impelling the needle just presses so much,
That each line of her labour *the copper may touch*,
As if done by a penny-a-liner.

And behold! how the fast-growing images gleam!
Like the sparkles of gold in a sunshiny stream,
  Till perplex'd by the glittering issue,
You repine for a light of a tenderer kind—
And in choosing a substance for making a blind,
  Do not sneeze at the paper call'd *tissue.*

For, subdued by the sheet so transparent and white,
Your design will appear in a soberer light,
  And reveal its defects on inspection,
Just as Glory achieved, or political scheme,
And some more of our dazzling performances seem
  Not so bright on a *cooler reflection.*

So the juvenile Poet with ecstasy views
His first verses, and dreams that the songs of his Muse
  Are as brilliant as Moore's and as tender—
Till some critical sheet scans the faulty design,
And alas! *takes the shine out of every line*
  That had form'd such a vision of splendour;

Certain objects, however, may come in your sketch,
Which, designed by a hand unaccustom'd to etch,
  With a luckless result may be branded;
Wherefore add this particular rule to your code,
Let all vehicles take the *wrong* side of the road,
  And man, woman, and child, be *left-handed.*

Yet regard not the awkward appearance with doubt,
But remember how often mere blessings fall out,
That at first seem'd no better than curses;
So, till *things take a turn*, live in hope, and depend
That whatever is wrong will come right in the end,
And console you for all your *reverses*.

But of errors why speak, when for beauty and truth
Your free, spirited Etching is worthy, in sooth,
Of that Club (may all honour betide it!)
Which, tho' dealing in copper, by genius and taste,
Has accomplish'd *a service of plate* not disgraced
By the work of a Goldsmith beside it! *

So your sketch superficially drawn on the plate,
It becomes you to fix in a permanent state,
Which involves a precise operation,
With a keen biting fluid, which *eating its way*—
As in other professions is common they say—
Has attain'd an artistical station.

And it's, oh! that some splenetic folks I could name
If they *must* deal in acids would use but the same,
In such innocent graphical labours!
In the place of the virulent spirit wherewith—
Like the polecat, the weasel, and things of that kith—
They keep biting the backs of their neighbours!

* The Deserted Village. Illustrated by the Etching Club.

But beforehand, with wax or the shoemaker's pitch,
You must build a neat dyke round the margin, in which
You may pour the dilute aquafortis.
For if raw, like a dram, it will shock you to trace
Your design with a horrible froth on its face,
Like a wretch in articulo mortis.

Like a wretch in the pangs that too many endure
From the use of *strong waters*, without any pure,
A vile practice, most sad and improper!
For, from painful examples, this warning is found,
That the raw burning spirit will *take up the ground*,
In the churchyard, as well as on copper!

But the Acid has duly been lower'd, and bites
Only just where the visible metal invites,
Like a nature inclined to meet troubles;
And behold! as each slender and glittering line
Effervesces, you'll trace the completed design
In an elegant bead-work of bubbles!

And yet constantly secretly eating its way,
The shrewd acid is making the substance its prey,
Like some sorrow beyond inquisition,
Which is gnawing the heart and the brain all the while
That the face is illumed by its cheerfullest smile,
And the wit is in bright ebullition.

But still stealthily feeding, the treacherous stuff
Has corroded and deepened some portions enough—
The pure sky, and the water so placid—
And these tenderer tints to defend from attack,
With some turpentine varnish and sooty lamp-black
You must *stop* out the ferreting acid.

But before with the varnishing brush you proceed,
Let the plate with cold water be thoroughly freed
From the other less innocent liquor—
After which, on whatever you want to protect,
Put a *coat* that will act to that very effect,
Like the black one which hangs on the Vicar.

Then the varnish well dried—urge the biting again,
But how long at its meal the *eau forte* may remain,
Time and practice alone can determine:
But of course not so long that the Mountain, and Mill,
The rude Bridge, and the Figures, whatever you will,
Are as black as the spots on your ermine.

It is true, none the less, that a dark-looking scrap,
With a sort of Blackheath, and Black Forest, mayhap,
Is considered as rather Rembrandty;
And that very black cattle and very black sheep,
A black dog, and a shepherd as black as a sweep
Are the pets of some great Dilettante.

So with certain designers, one needs not to name,
All this life is a dark scene of sorrow and shame,
From our birth to our final adjourning—
Yea, this excellent earth and its glories, alack!
What with ravens, palls, cottons, and devils, as black
As a Warehouse for Family Mourning!

But before your own picture arrives at that pitch,
While the lights are still light, and the shadows, though rich,
More transparent than ebony shutters,
Never minding what Black-Arted critics may say,
Stop the biting, and pour the green fluid away,
As you please, into bottles or gutters.

Then removing the ground and the wax *at a heat*,
Cleanse the surface with oil, spermaceti, or sweet—
For your hand a performance scarce proper—
So some careful professional person secure—
For the Laundress will not be a safe amateur—
To assist you in *cleaning the copper.*

And, in truth, 'tis a rather unpleasantish job,
To be done on a hot German stove, or a hob—
Though as sure of an instant forgetting
When—as after the dark clearing off of a storm—
The fair Landscape shines out in a lustre as warm
As the glow of the sun in its setting!

Thus your Etching complete, it remains but to hint,
That with certain assistance from paper and print,
  Which the proper Mechanic will settle,
You may charm all your Friends—without any sad
  tale
Of such perils and ills as beset Lady Sale—
  With *a fine India Proof of your Metal.*

A REFLECTION

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

"THOSE Evening Bells—those Evening Bells!"
  How sweet they used to be, and dear!
When full of all that Hope foretels,
  Their voice proclaim'd the new-born Year!

But, ah! much sadder now I feel,
  To hear that old melodious chime,
Recalling only how a *Peel*
  Has tax'd *the comings-in of Time!*

THE HAPPIEST MAN IN ENGLAND.

A SKETCH ON THE ROAD.

"It is the Soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object; but the Mind descries,
And thence delight, disgust, and cool indifference rise."

CRABBE.

"A CHARMING morning, sir," remarked my only fellow-passenger in the Comet, as soon as I had settled myself in the opposite corner of the coach.

As a matter of course and courtesy I assented; though I had certainly seen better days. It did not rain; but the weather was gloomy, and the air felt raw, as it well might with a pale dim sun overhead, that seemed to have lost all power of roasting.

"Quite an Italian Sky," added the Stranger, looking up at a sort of French grey coverlet that would have given a Neapolitan fancy the ague.

However, I acquiesced again, but was obliged to protest against the letting down of both windows in order to admit what was called the "fresh invigorating breeze from the Surrey Hills."

To atone for this objection, however, I agreed

that the coach was the best, easiest, safest, and fastest in England, and the road the most picturesque out of London. Complaisance apart, we were passing between two vegetable screens, of a colour converted by dust to a really "invisible green," and so high, that they excluded any prospect as effectually as if they had been Venetian blinds. The stranger, nevertheless, watched the monotonous fence with evident satisfaction.

"No such hedges, sir, out of England."

"I believe not, sir!"

"No, sir; quite a national feature. They are peculiar to the inclosures of our highly cultivated island. You may travel from Calais to Constantinople without the eye reposing on a similar spectacle."

"So I have understood, sir."

"Fact, sir: they are unique. And yonder is another rural picture unparalleled, I may say, in continental Europe—a meadow of rich pasture, enamelled with the indigenous daisy and a multiplicity of buttercups!"

The oddity of the phraseology made me look curiously at the speaker. A pastoral poet, thought I—but no—he was too plump and florid to belong to that famishing fraternity, and in his dress, as well as in his person, had every appearance of a

man well to do in the world. He was more probably a gentleman farmer, an admirer of fine grazing-land, and perhaps delighted in a well-dressed paddock and genteel haystack of his own. But I did him injustice, or rather to his taste—which was far less exclusive—for the next scene to which he invited my attention, was of a totally different character—a vast, bleak, scurfy-looking common, too barren to afford even a picking to any living creatures, except a few crows. The view, however, elicited a note of admiration from my companion:

"What an extensive prospect! Genuine, uncultivated nature—and studded with rooks!"

The stranger had now furnished me with a clue to his character; which he afterwards more amusingly unravelled. He was an Optimist;—one of those blessed beings (for they are blessed) who think that whatever is, is beautiful as well as right:—practical philosophers who make the best of everything; imaginative painters, who draw each object *en beau*, and deal plentifully in *couleur de rose*. And they are right. To be good—in spite of all the old story-books, and all their old morals,—is not to be happy. Still less does it result from Rank, Power, Learning, or Riches; from the single state or a double one, or even from good

health or a clean conscience. The source of felicity, as the poet truly declares, is in the Mind—for like my fellow-traveller, the man who has a mind to be happy will be so, on the plainest commons that nature can set before him—with or without the rooks.

The reader of Crabbe will remember how graphically he has described, in his "Lover's Journey," the different aspects of the same landscape to the same individual, under different moods—on his outward road, an Optimist, like my fellow-traveller, but on his return a malcontent like myself.

In the mean time, the coach stopped—and opposite to what many a person, if seated in one of its right-hand corners, would have considered a very bad look out,—a muddy square space, bounded on three sides by plain brick stabling and wooden barns, with a dwarf wall, and a gate, for a foreground to the picture. In fact, a strawyard, but untenanted by any live stock, as if an Owenite plan amongst the brute creation, for living in a social parallelogram, had been abandoned. There seemed no peg here on which to hang any eulogium; but the eye of the Optimist detected one in a moment:

"What a desirable Pond for Ducks!"

He then shifted his position to the opposite window, and with equal celerity discovered "a capital

Pump! with oceans of excellent Spring Water, and a commodious handle within reach of the smallest Child!"

I wondered to myself how he would have described the foreign Fountains, where the sparkling fluid gushes from groupes of Sculpture into marble basins, and without the trouble of pumping at all, ministers to the thirst and cleanliness of half a city. And yet I had seen some of our Travellers pass such a superb Water-work with scarcely a glance,

and certainly without a syllable of notice! It is such Headless Tourists, by the way, who throng to the German Baths and consider themselves Bubbled, because, without any mind's eye at all, they do not see all the pleasant things which were so graphically described by the Old Man of the Brunnens. For my own part, I could not help thinking that I must have lost some pleasure in my own progress through life by being difficult to please.

For example, even during the present journey, whilst I had been inwardly grumbling at the weather, and yawning at the road, my fellow-traveller had been revelling in Italian skies, salubrious breezes, verdant enclosures, pastoral pictures, sympathising with wet habits and dry, and enjoying desirable duck-ponds, and parochial Pumps!

What a contrast, methought, between the cheerful contented spirit of my present companion, and the dissatisfied temper and tone of Sir W. W., with whom I once had the uncomfortable honour of travelling *tête-à-tête* from Leipzig to Berlin. The road, it is true, was none of the most interesting, but even the tame and flat scenery of the Lincolnshire Fens may be rendered still more wearisome by sulkily throwing yourself back in your carriage and talking of Switzerland! But Sir W. W. was far too nice to be wise—too fastidious to be happy

—too critical to be contented. Whereas my present coach-fellow was not afraid to admire a common-place inn—I forget its exact locality—but he described it as "superior to any oriental Caravansery—and with a Sign that, in the Infancy of The Art, might have passed for a *Chef d'Œuvre.*"

Happy Man! How he must have enjoyed the Exhibitions of the Royal Academy, whereas to judge by our periodical critiques on such Works of Modern Art, there are scarcely a score out of a thousand annual Pictures that ought to give pleasure to a Connoisseur. Nay, even the Louvre has failed to satisfy some of its visitants, on the same principle that a matchless collection of Titians has been condemned for the want of a good Teniers..

But my fellow traveller was none of that breed: he had nothing in common with a certain Lady, who with half London, or at least its Londoners, had inspected Wanstead House, prior to its demolition, and on being asked for her opinion of that princely mansion, replied that it was "short of cupboards."

In fact, he soon had an opportunity of pronouncing on a Country Seat—far, very, very far inferior to the House just mentioned, and declared it to be one which "Adam himself would have chosen for a Family Residence, if Domestic Architecture had flourished in the primeval Ages."

Happy Man, again! for with what joy, and comfort, and cheerfulness, for his co-tenants, would he have inhabited the enviable dwelling; and yet, to my private knowledge, the Proprietor was one of the most miserable of his species, simply because he chose to go through life like a pug-dog—with his nose turned up at everything in the world. And, truly, flesh is grass, and beauty is dust, and gold is dross, nay, life itself but a vapour; but instead of dwelling on such disparagements, it is far wiser and happier, like the florid gentleman in one corner of the Comet, to remember that one is not a Sworn Appraiser, nor bound by oath like an Ale-Conner to think small beer of small beer.

From these reflections I was suddenly roused by the Optimist, who earnestly begged me to look out of the Window at a prospect which, though pleasing, was far from a fine one, for either variety or extent.

"There, sir,—there's a Panorama! A perfect circle of enchantment! realizing the Arabia Felix of Fairy Land in the County of Kent!"

"Very pretty, indeed."

"It's a gem, sir, even in our Land of Oaks—and may challenge a comparison with the most luxuriant Specimens of what the Great Gilpin calls Forest Scenery!"

"I think it may."

"By the bye, did you ever see Scrublands, sir, in Sussex?"

"Never, sir."

"Then, sir, you have yet to enjoy a romantic scene of the Sylvan Character, not to be paralleled within the limits of Geography! To describe it would require one to soar into the regions of Poetry, but I do not hesitate to say, that if the celebrated Robinson Crusoe were placed within sight of it, he would exclaim in a transport, 'Juan Fernandez!'"

"I do not doubt it, sir."

"Perhaps, sir, you have been in Derbyshire?"

"No, sir."

"Then, sir, you have another splendid treat *in futuro*—Braggins—a delicious amalgamation of Art and Nature,—a perfect Eden, sir,—and the very spot, if there be one on the Terrestrial Globe, for the famous Milton to have realized his own 'Paradise Regained!'"

In this glowing style, waxing warmer and warmer with his own descriptions, the florid gentleman painted for me a series of highly-coloured sketches of the places he had visited; each a retreat that would wonderfully have broken the fall of our first Parents, and so thickly scattered throughout the

counties, that by a moderate computation our Fortunate Island contained at least a thousand "Perfect Paradises," copyhold or freehold. A pleasant contrast to the gloomy pictures which are drawn by certain desponding and agriculturally-depressed Spirits who cannot find a single Elysian Field, pasture or arable, in the same country!

In the meantime, such is the force of sympathy, the Optimist had gradually inspired me with something of his own spirit, and I began to look out for and detect unrivalled forest scenery, and perfect panoramas, and little Edens, and might in time have picked out a romantic pump, or a picturesque post,—but, alas! in the very middle of my course of Beau Idealism, the coach stopped, the door opened, and with a hurried good morning, the florid gentleman stepped out of the stage and into a gig which had been waiting for him at the end of a cross-road, and in another minute was driving down the lane between two of those hedges that are only to be seen in England.

"Well, go where thou wilt," thought I, as he disappeared behind the fence, "thou art certainly the Happiest Man in England!"

Yes—he was gone; and a light and a glory had departed with him. The air again felt raw, the sky seemed duller, the sun more dim and pale, and

the road more heavy. The scenery appeared to become tamer and tamer, the inns more undesirable, and their signs were mere daubs. At the first opportunity I obtained a glass of sherry, but its taste was vapid; every thing in short appeared "flat, stale, and unprofitable." Like a *Bull* in the Alley, whose flattering rumours hoist up the public funds, the high sanguine tone of the Optimist had raised my spirits considerably above par; but now his operations had ceased, and by the usual reaction my mind sank again even below its natural level. My short-lived enthusiasm was gone, and instead of the cheerful fertile country through which I had been journeying, I seemed to be travelling that memorable long stage between Dan and Beersheba where "all was barren."

Some months afterwards I was tempted to go into Essex to inspect a small Freehold Property which was advertised for sale in that county. It was described, in large and small print, as "a delightful Swiss Villa, the prettiest thing in Europe, and enjoying a boundless prospect over a country proverbial for Fertility, and resembling that Traditional Land of Promise described metaphorically in Holy Writ as overflowing with Milk and Honey."

Making all due allowance, however, for such

42705

professional flourishes, this very Desirable Investment deviated in its features even more than usual from its portrait in the prospectus.

The Villa turned out to be little better than an ornamented Barn, and the Promised land was some of the worst land in England, and overflowed occasionally by the neighbouring river. An Optimist could hardly have discovered a single merit on the estate; but he did; for whilst I was gazing in blank disappointment at the uncultivated nature before me, not even studded with rooks, I heard his familiar voice at my elbow—

"Rather a small property, sir—but amply secured by ten solid miles of Terra Firma from the encroachments of the German Ocean."

"And if the sea could," I retorted, "it seems to me very doubtful whether it would care to enter on the premises."

"Perhaps not as a matter of marine taste," said the Optimist. "Perhaps not, sir. And yet, in my pensive moments, I have fancied that a place like this with a sombre interest about it, would be a desirable sort of Wilderness, and more in unison with an Il Penseroso cast of feelings than the laughing beauties of a Villa in the Regent's Park, the Cynosure of Fashion and Gaiety, enlivened by an infinity of equipages. But excuse me, sir, I

perceive that I am wanted elsewhere," and the florid gentleman went off at a trot towards a little man in black, who was beckoning to him from the door of the Swiss Villa.

"Yes," was my reflection as he turned away from me, if he can find in such a swamp as this a Fancy Wilderness, a sort of Shenstonian Solitude for a sentimental fit to evaporate in, he must certainly be the Happiest Man in England."

As to his pensive moments, the mere idea of them sufficed to set my risible muscles in a quiver. But as if to prove how he would have comported himself in the Slough of Despond, during a subsequent ramble of exploration round the estate, he actually plumped up to his middle in a bog;—an accident which only drew from him the remark that the place afforded "a capital opportunity for a spirited proprietor to establish a Splendid Mud Bath, like the ones so much in vogue at the German Spaws!"

"If that gentleman takes a fancy to the place," I remarked to the person who was showing me round the property, "he will be a determined bidder."

"Him bid!" exclaimed the man, with an accent of the utmost astonishment—"Him bid!—why he's the Auctioneer that's to sell us! I thought you

would have remarked that in his speech, for he imitates in his talk the advertisements of the famous Mr. Robins. He's called the Old Gentleman."

"Old! why he appears to be in the prime of life."

"Yes, sir,—but it's the other Old Gentleman—"

"What! the Devil?"

"Yes, sir,—because you see, he's always *a-knocking down of somebody's little Paradise.*"

SPRING.

A NEW VERSION.

Ham.—The air bites shrewdly—it is very cold.
Hor.—It is a nipping and an eager air.
HAMLET.

"COME, *gentle* Spring! ethereal *mildness* come!"
Oh! Thomson, void of rhyme as well as reason,
How couldst thou thus poor human nature hum?
There's no such season.

The Spring! I shrink and shudder at her name!
For why, I find her breath a bitter blighter!
And suffer from her *blows* as if they came
From Spring the Fighter.

Her praises, then, let hardy poets sing,
And be her tuneful laureates and upholders,
Who do not feel as if they had a *Spring*
Pour'd down their shoulders!

Let others eulogize her floral shows,
From me they cannot win a single stanza,
I know her blooms are in full blow—and so's
The Influenza.

Her cowslips, stocks, and lilies of the vale,
Her honey-blossoms that you hear the bees at,
Her pansies, daffodils, and primrose pale,
Are things I sneeze at!

Fair is the vernal quarter of the year!
And fair its early buddings and its blowings—
But just suppose Consumption's seeds appear
With other sowings!

For me, I find, when eastern winds are high,
A frigid, not a genial inspiration;
Nor can, like Iron-Chested Chubb, defy
An inflammation.

Smitten by breezes from the land of plague,
To me all vernal luxuries are fables,
Oh! where's the *Spring* in a rheumatic leg,
Stiff as a table's?

I limp in agony,—I wheeze and cough;
And quake with Ague, that great Agitator;
Nor dream, before July, of leaving off
My Respirator.

What wonder if in May itself I lack
A peg for laudatory verse to hang on?—
Spring mild and gentle?—yes, as Spring-heeled Jack
To those he sprang on!

In short, whatever panegyrics lie
In fulsome odes too many to be cited,
The tenderness of Spring is all my eye,
And that is blighted!

THE LONGEST HOUR IN MY LIFE.

AN EXTRAVAGANZA.

CHAPTER I.

"TIME," says *Rosalind*, in that delicious sylvan comedy called "As You Like It," —"Time travels in divers paces with divers persons."

And thence she prettily and wittily proceeds to enumerate the parties with whom he gallops, trots, ambles, or comes to a stand-still. And nothing can be truer than her theory.

Old Chronos has indeed infinite rates of performance—from railway to snail-way. As the butcher's boy said of his horse, "He can go all sorts of paces—as fast as you like, or as slow as you don't."

But hark! what says a clear bell-like voice from the Horse-Guards, that "time is time, and one o'clock is one o'clock all the town over."

True, old Regulator! The remark is as correct as striking, time *is* time, and the horological divisions are or should be synchronous from Knightsbridge to Whitechapel. But the old Mower is, like ourselves, a compound being—body and spirit. Hence he hath, as the Watchmakers say, "a duplex movement:" namely, Mechanical and Metaphysical;—the first, governed absolutely by the march of the sun, and the swing of a pendulum; the second, determined by moral contingencies: the one capricious as the *ad libitum*, the other exact as the *tempo obligato* of the musician. Thus the manifold bells of London—sounding, like the ancient chorus, a solemn accompaniment to the grand drama of Human Life—thus hundreds of iron tongues simultaneously proclaim the current hour to the vast metropolis, yet with what different speed has time travelled from chime to chime with its millions of inhabitants—with the Bride, and the Widow, the Marchioness in the ball-room, and the Milliner in her garret, the Lounger at his club, and the Criminal in the condemned cell!

Of these "divers paces with divers persons," there is a memorable illustration in "Old Mor-

tality," where Morton and the stern Covenanters, with opposite feelings, watch on the same dial-plate the progress of the hand towards the fatal black point, at which the hour and a life were together to expire.

The Novelist has painted the victim "awaiting till the sword destined to slay him crept out of the scabbard gradually, and as it were by straw-breadths." The walls "seemed to drop with blood, and the light tick of the clock thrilled on his ear with such loud painful distinctness, as if each sound were the prick of a bodkin inflicted on the naked nerve of the organ."

Here then was one of those persons whom Time gallops withal, whereas to the bloodthirsty Fanatics he crept on so leisurely, that Impatience could not refrain from giving the laggard a thrust forward on his course.

In our Courts of Law, Civil and Criminal, the divers paces of Time are continually exemplified, and have been verified on oath by scores of respectable witnesses.

For example: there was once a murder committed at Tottenham; and on the trial of the assassin, it became a point of judicial importance to determine the exact interval between two distant pistol-shots.

"Five minutes!" deposed Miss White, who had passed the evening in question *tête-à-tête* with her affianced sweetheart.

"Fifteen," swore Mrs. Black, who had spent the same hours in vainly expecting a husband addicted to the alehouse.

"Bless my soul and body!" exclaimed the Judge, naturally astonished at such a wide discrepancy; "the clocks in that part of the country must be sadly in want of regulation!"

But his lordship himself was in error. The material wheels, springs, pendulums, and weights, worked truly enough; it was the moral machinery that was accountable for the variation. The rectification, however, was at hand.

The suburban village of Tottenham swarms, as is well known, with resident Members of the Society of Friends—a sect remarkable for punctuality, and the preciseness and uniformity of their habits—whose lives flow as equably as the sand of the hour-glass—whose pulses beat with the regularity of the pendulum. Accordingly, five Quakers who had heard the shots, were examined as witnesses; and, on their several affirmations, gave the interval between the two reports with little more variation than so many Admiralty Chronometers. As thus:

	Min.	Sec.
Obadiah	9	59
Jacob	9	58
Ephraim	9	59
Joseph	9	59
Samuel	9	58

Being actually the *juste milieu*, or a drab average, between the extreme statements of Black and White.

CHAPTER II.

But to my personal experiences.

Like my fellow-mortals in fair *Rosalind's* catalogue, I have found Time to resemble both the Hare and the Tortoise, sometimes as fleet as the quadruped, at others as slow as the reptile in his race. Many bright and brief days recur to my memory when he flew past with the speed of a flying Childers, many dark and long ones, when he stepped as heavily and deliberately as the black horse before a hearse. All his divers paces are familiar to me—he has galloped, trotted, ambled, walked with me, and on one memorable occasion, seemed almost to stand stock-still. Never, oh, never can I forget the day-long seconds which made up those monthlike minutes, which composed

that interminable Hour—the longest in my whole life!

"And pray, sir, how and when was that?"

For the when, madam, to be particular, it was from half-past nine to half-past ten o'clock, A.M., on the First of May, new style, Anno Domini, 1822. For the how, you shall hear.

At the date just mentioned my residence was in the Adelphi, and having a strong partiality for the study of Natural History from living specimens, it suited both my convenience and my taste to drop in frequently at the menagerie at Exeter Change.

These visits were generally paid at an early hour, before town or country cousins called to see the lions, and indeed it frequently happened that I found myself quite alone with the wild beasts. An annual guinea entitled me to go as often as agreeable, which happened so frequently, that the animals soon knew me by sight, whilst with some of them, for instance the elephant,* I obtained quite a friendly footing. Even Nero looked kindly on me, and the rest of the creatures did not eye

* This same elephant once nearly killed an Irishman, for an insult offered to his trunk. The act was rash in the extreme; "but it was impossible," the Hibernian said, "to resist a nose that you could pull with both hands."

me with the glances half shy and half savage which they threw at less familiar visiters.

But there was one notable exception. The royal Bengal tiger could not or would not recognise me, but persisted in growling and scowling at me as a stranger, whom of course he longed to take in. Nevertheless there was a fascination in his terrible beauty, and even in his enmity, that often held me in front of his cage, enjoying the very impotence of his malice, and recalling various tragical tales of human victims mangled or devoured by such striped monsters as the one before me; and, as if the cunning brute penetrated my thoughts, he would rehearse as it were all the man-eating manœuvres of the species: now creeping stealthily round his den, as if skulking through his native jungles, then crouching for the fatal spring, and anon bounding against the bars of his cage, with a short, angry roar, expressive of the most fiendish malignity. By the by, madam, did you ever hear of the doctrine of Instinctive Antipathies?

"Yes, sir; and Mr. Lamb or Mr. Hazlitt quotes an instance of two strangers, who on meeting each other in the street immediately began to fight."

Well, madam, there seemed to be some such original antipathy between me and the tiger. At any rate he took a peculiar pleasure in my presence

in ostentatiously parading his means of offence. Sometimes, stretching out one huge muscular leg between the bars, he unsheathed and exhibited his tremendous claws, after which, with a devilish ogre-like grin, he displayed his formidable teeth, and then by a deliberate yawn indulged me with a look into that horrible red gulf, down which he would fain have bolted me in gobbets. The yawning jaws were invariably closed with a ferocious snap, and the brutal performance was wound up with a howl so unutterably hollow and awful, so cannibalish, that even at its hundredth repetition it still curdled my very blood, and thrilled every nerve in my body.

"Lord! what a dreadful creature!"

Very, ma'am. And yet that Carnivorous Monster, capable of appalling the heart of the bravest man, failed once to strike terror into one of the weakest of the species—a delicate little girl, of about six years old, and rather small for her age. She had been gazing at the Tiger very earnestly for some minutes, and what do you think she said?

"Pray what, sir?"

"Oh, Mr. Cross, if ever that beautiful great pussy has young ones, do save me a kitten!"

CHAPTER III.

Apropos of Time and his divers paces, he notoriously goes very slowly—as Sterne vouches—with a solitary captive, and of all solitary captives methinks he must go slowest with a caged wild beast. The human prisoner, gifted with a mind, can beguile the weary hours with dreams of the past or future—if of an intellectual turn, and educated, he can amuse himself with philosophical speculations, or mathematical calculations. He may even indulge in poetical composition. But a beast, a stupid, ignorant beast, has no such mental resources. If he struck a lyre it would be to immortal smash. Neither would it be of any avail to supply him with materials for those various handicrafts by the exercise of which the Philadelphian Solitaries, described by Dickens, contrived to lose and neglect the creeping foot of time in their confinement. A lion, if furnished with the whole stock of a marine-store shop, would never "manufacture a sort of Dutch clock from disregarded odds and ends," with a vinegar-bottle for the pendulum: neither would a tiger appear "in a white paper hat of his own making," though expressly provided with stationery for the purpose, from her Majesty's own office. It follows that wild animals in confine-

ment must experience great weariness—in fact, they obviously do suffer from *ennui* in no common degree.

"How, sir? A vulgar, ill-bred wild beast, afflicted with the peculiar complaint of a woman of *ton*—of a lady of quality?"

Precisely, madam. There is a case on record of a Lioness with all the symptoms of the complaint, and of her adoption of that fashionable antidote, a lapdog.

"A lapdog! What, a dear little King Charles's spaniel?"

No, but a little terrier, which the Lioness in a natural state of health would have devoured on his first introduction, whereas being troubled with the vapours, she could not dispense with a plaything that happened to amuse her.

"A Lioness with the vapours, and a lapdog—ridiculous!"

Madam, I am in earnest, severely serious. But just do me the honour to step with me, in fancy, to the Zoological Gardens. There—look at that Lioness. How indolently she stretches herself—how listlessly she rolls her head and half closes her languid eyes! Then what distressing yawns, as if for a change she would turn herself inside out!

"Rather like *ennui*, I confess."

No doubt of it. Now look at yonder moping Lion, too apathetic even to glance at us. Look at his head between his knees, and his tail—that formidable tail, furnished at the end, as naturalists tell us, with a kind of prickle, so that he can spur as well as lash himself into a hasty fit—lying as idle and still as a torpid snake. Did you ever see an attitude more expressive of lassitude? and yet he hath but taken a few turns round his den, and given one roar since sunrise. All he cares is to blink, and gape, and doze, through the long hours till supper-time. Yonder again is a female Puma, with head drooping and closed eyes, uttering at intervals an inward groan, as palpable a sufferer from world-weariness as Mariana at the Moated Grange. The panthers, leopards, ounces, jaguars, and the smaller cats, from constitutional irritability, are somewhat more active, or rather restless; but it is only another mode of expressing the same thing. One and all are labouring under *tedium vitæ* so intensely that it is a wonder they have never discovered self-murder! In fact Chuny, the elephant who was shot for attempting to break out of his prison, is said, after receiving many musket-balls, to have knelt down at the command of his keeper, and to have presented his head with suicidal docility to the marksmen.

"Their lives, poor things, must indeed be very monotonous!"

Miserably so, madam, and their hours like ages! No amusement, no employment to shorten them! One can fancy Time himself looking in at the Beasts through the iron lattices, and tauntingly whispering, "Ah, ah! with all your murderous paws, and claws, and jaws, you cannot kill ME!"

"One may, indeed; but now, if you please, sir, we will go. My own spirits begin to flag, and a sort of lassitude comes over me. I presume from example and the influence of the place.

Beyond question, madam. There was a case in point. My friend H., the well-known artist, once had occasion to take the portrait of a Lion in the Tower Menagerie; but he went so frequently, and required such long sittings, that, knowing the usual facility of his pencil, I became curious to learn the cause.

"Why, the truth is," said H., "if I could only have kept my spirits up and my eyes open, the thing would have been done in a tithe of the time; but what with the dejection and drowsiness of the beasts, and their continual gaping, I was so infected with their dulness that after the first ten minutes I invariably began to blink and yawn too, and soon fell asleep.

CHAPTER IV.

"Huzza!"

My dear sir—

"Huzza! huzza!"

My dear sirs—

"Huzza! huzza! huzza!"

Gentlemen—Ladies—Boys—Girls—good people *do* allow me to ask the reason of such vociferous cheering?

"The Baron for ever!"

Eh?

"The Doctor for ever!"

Whom?

"The thing with a hard name for ever!"

What Baron?—what Doctor?—what thing with a hard name?

"What thing? Why, Som-nam-bam-boozle-fusilism, to be sure. The animal sent the painter to sleep, didn't he?"

Yes.

"And ain't that Animal Magnetism?"

Yes, yes—certainly, yes—as clear a case of Mesmerism *as ever I met with!*

CHAPTER V.

On the morning of the first of May, 1822, between nine and ten o'clock, I entered the menagerie of Exeter 'Change, and walked directly as usual into the great room appropriated to the larger animals. There was no person visible, keeper or visiter, about the place—like Alexander Selkirk, "I was Lord of the Fowl and the Brute." I had the lions all to myself. As I stepped through the door my eyes mechanically turned towards the den of my old enemy, the royal Bengal tiger, fully expecting to receive from him the customary salutes of a spiteful grin and a growl. But the husky voice was silent, the grim face was nowhere to be seen. The cage was empty!

My feeling on the discovery was a mixed one of relief and disappointment. — Methought I breathed more freely from the removal of that vague apprehension which had always clung to me, like a presentiment of injury sooner or later from the savage beast. A few minutes, nevertheless, spent in walking about the room, convinced me that his departure had left a void never properly to be filled up. Another royal tiger, larger even, and as ferocious, might take his place—but it was

unlikely that the new tenant would ever select me for that marked and personal animosity which had almost led me at times to believe that we inherited some ancient feud from our respective progenitors. An enemy as well as a friend of old standing, though not lamented, must be *missed*. It must be a loss, if not to affection, to memory and association, to be deprived of even the ill-will, the frown, or sneer of an old familiar face, and the brute was, at any rate, "a good hater." There was something piquant, if not flattering, in being selected for his exclusive malignity. But he was gone, and the menagerie had henceforward lost, for me, a portion of its interest. But stop—there is a Gentle Reader in an ungentle hurry to expostulate.

"What!—sorry for a nasty, vicious, wild beast, as owed you a grudge for nothing at all, and only wanted an opportunity to spit his spite?"

Exactly so, madam. The case is far from uncommon. Nay, I once knew a foreign gentleman in a very similar predicament. From his German reading, helped by an appropriate style of feeding, the stomach of his imagination had become so stuffed and overloaded with Zamiels, Brocken Witches, Hobgoblins, Vampires, Were Wolves, Incubi, and other devilries, that for years he never

passed a night without what we call bad dreams. Well, I had not seen him for some months, when at last he called upon me, looking so wobegone and out of spirits, as to make me inquire rather anxiously about his health. He shook his head dejectedly, sighed deeply, laid his hand on his chest, as if about to complain of it, and in a broken voice and broken English informed me of his case.

"O, my goot fellow, I am miserable quite. Dere is someting all wrong in me—someting very bad—I have not had de Night-Mare for tree weeks."

"Well, after that, sir, I can swallow the tiger. So pray go on."

After the first surprise was over my curiosity became excited, and I began to speculate on the causes of the creature's absence. Was he dead? Had he been destroyed for his ferocity, or parted with to make room for a milder specimen of the species? Had he gone to perform in the legitimate drama—or taken French leave? I was looking round for somebody to answer these queries, when all at once I descried an object that made me feel like a man suddenly blasted with a thunderbolt.

"Mercy on us! You don't mean to say that it was the Tiger?"

I do. Huddled up in a dark corner of the room he had been overlooked by me on my entrance, and cunningly suppressing his usual snarl of recognition, the treacherous beast had proceeded to intercept my retreat. At my first glimpse of him he was skulking along, close to the wall, in the direction of the door. Had I possessed the full power of motion, he must have arrived there first—but terror riveted me to the spot. There I stood, all my faculties frozen up, dizzy, motionless, and dumb. Could I have cried out, my last breath of life would certainly have escaped from me in one long, shrill scream. But it was pent up in my bosom, where my heart, after one mighty bound upwards, was fluttering like a scared bird. There was a feeling of deadly choking at my throat, of mortal sickness at my stomach. My tongue in an instant had become stiff and parched—my jaw locked—my eyes fixed in their sockets, and from the rush of blood seemed looking through a reddish mist, whilst within my head a whizzing noise struck up that rendered me utterly incapable of thought or comprehension. Such, as far as I can recollect, was my condition, and which, from the symptoms, I should say, was very similar to a combined attack of apoplexy and paralysis.

This state, however, did not last. At first, every

limb and joint had suddenly stiffened, rigid as cast iron; my very flesh, with the blood in its veins, had congealed into marble: but after a few seconds, the muscles as abruptly relaxed, the joints gave way, the blood thawed and seemed escaping from the vessels, the substance of my body seemed losing its solidity, and with an inexpressible sense of its imbecility, I felt as if my whole frame would fall in a shapeless mass on the floor.

"Gracious goodness—how dreadful!"

The tiger, in the interim, having gained the door, had crouched down — cat-like — his back curved inwards, his face between his fore-paws, and with his glaring eyeballs steadily fixed on mine, was creeping on his belly by half-inches towards me, his tail meanwhile working from side to side behind him, and as it were *sculling* him on.

In another moment this movement ceased, the tail straightened itself out, except the tip, which turned up, and became nervously agitated, a warning as certain as the like signal from an enraged rattlesnake.

There was no time to be lost. A providential inspiration, a direct whisper, as it were, from heaven, reminded me of the empty cage, and suggested, with lightning rapidity, that the same massive bars

which had formerly kept the Man Eater within, might now keep him out. In another instant I was within the den, had pulled to the door, and shot the heavy bolt. The Tiger foiled by the suddenness of this unexpected manœuvre, immediately rose from his couchant position, and after violently lashing each flank with his tail, gave vent to his dissatisfaction in a prolonged inward grumble, that sounded like distant thunder. But he did not long deliberate on his course: to my infinite horror, I saw him approach the den, where rearing on his hind legs, in the attitude the heralds call rampant, he gave a tremendous roar, which made my blood curdle, and then resting his fore-paws on the front of the cage, with his huge, hideous face, pressed against the bars, he stared at me a long, long, long stare, with two red fiery eyes, that alternately gloomed and sparkled like burning coals.

"And didn't the Tiger, sir, poke his great claws, sir, into the cage, sir, and pick you out, sir, bit by bit, sir, between the bars?"

Patience, my dear little fellow, patience. Since the Creation, perhaps, a Man and a Wild Beast, literally changing places, were never before placed in such an anomalous position: and in these days of dulness, and a dearth of dramatic novelties,

having furnished so very original and striking a situation, the Reader ought to be allowed a little time to enjoy it.

CHAPTER VI.

Ha! ha! ha!

"Zounds!—pshaw!—phoo!—pish!" ejaculates a Courteous Reader, "it's all a hoax, the author is laughing at us."

Not at all. The cachinnatory syllables were intended to signify the peal of dreary laughter with which the hyena hailed my incarceration. It was perhaps only a coincidence—and yet the beast might comprehend and enjoy the sudden turning of the tables, the Man become a Prisoner, and the Brute his Gaoler.

It might tickle his savage fancy to behold a creature of the species before which the animals of his own kind instinctively quailed and skulked off—it might gratify a splenetic hatred, born of fear, to see a member of that aristocratic order reduced by a Revolution, beyond the French one, into a doomed captive in such a Bastile!

"Excuse me, sir, but do you really believe that a brute beast ever reasons so curiously?"

It is difficult to say, madam, for they never utter,

much less publish, their speculations. That some do reason and even moralize——

"Moralize! what, a brute beast—for instance, a great bear—a moralist like Dr. Johnson?"

Yes, madam;—or Hervey, of the Meditations. The hyena is notoriously a frequenter of graves—a prowler amongst the Tombs. He is, also, the only beast that laughs—at least above his breath. And putting these two circumstances together, who knows but that the Ghoul acquired his Sardonic grin, and his cynical ha! ha! ha! from a too intimate acquaintance with the dusty, mouldy, rubbishing, unsavoury relics of the pride, power, pomps and vanities of the so-called Lord of the Creation?

"Who indeed, sir? What man can see into the heart of a brute beast?"

Why, if any one, ma'am, it's the man who puts his head into the lion's mouth.

CHAPTER VII.

It was now my turn to know and understand how Time "travels in divers paces with divers persons." To feel how the precious stuff that life is made of might be drawn out, like fine gold, into inconceivable lengths. To learn the extreme duration of minims and seconds, and possible "last

moments" of existence—the practicability of living ages, as in dreams, between one vital pulsation and another!

Oh those interminable and invaluable intervals between breath and breath!

How shall I describe—by what gigantic scale can I give a notion of the enormous expansion of the ordinary fractions of time, when marked on a Dial of the World's circumference by the Shadow of Death?

Methinks while that horrible face, and those red, fiery eyes were gazing at me, Pyramids might have been built—Babylons founded—Empires established—Royal Dynasties have risen, ruled, and fallen—yea, even that other Planets might have fulfilled their appointed cycles from Creation to Destruction, during those nominal minutes which by their immense span seemed actually to be preparing me for Eternity!

CHAPTER VIII.

In the meantime the tiger kept his old position in front of the cage, without making any attempt to get at me. He could have no fear of my getting out to eat *him*, and as to his devouring me, having recently breakfasted on shin of beef he seemed in no hurry for a second meal, knowing perfectly well,

that whenever he might feel inclined to lunch, he had me ready for it, as it were, in his safe.

Thus the beast continued with intolerable perseverance to stare in upon me, who, crouched up at the further corner of the den, had only to await his pleasure or displeasure. Once or twice, indeed, I tried to call out for help, but the sound died in my throat, and when at length I succeeded, the tiger, whether to drown my voice, or from sympathy, set up such a roar at the same time, and this he did so repeatedly, that convinced of the futility of the experiment, I abandoned myself in silence to my fate. Its crisis was approaching. If he had no hunger for food the savage had an appetite for revenge, and soon showed himself disposed, cat-like, to sport with his victim, and torment him a little by exciting his terror. I have said cat-like, but there seemed something more supernaturally ingenious in the cruelty of his proceedings. He certainly made fâces at me, twisting his grim features with the most frightful contortions—especially his mouth, drawing back his lips so as to show his teeth—then smacking them, or licking them with his tongue—of the roughness of which he occasionally gave me a hint by rasping it against the iron bars. But the climax of his malice was to come. Strange as it may seem, he absolutely winked at

me, not a mere feline blink at excess of light, but a significant, knowing wink, and then inflating his cheeks, puffed into my face a long, hot breath, smelling, most ominously, *of raw flesh!*

The horrid wretch! why he seemed to know what he was about like a Christian!"

Yes, madam—or, at any rate like an inhuman human being. But, before long, he evidently grew tired of such mere pastime. His tail—that index of mischief—resumed its activity, swinging and flourishing in the air, with a thump every now and then on his flank, as if he were beating time with it to some Tiger's March in his own head. At last it dropped, and at the same instant thrusting one paw between the bars he tried by an experimental semi-circular sweep, whether any part of me was within his reach. He took nothing, however, by his motion, but his talons so nearly brushed my knees, that a change of posture became imperative. The den was too low to allow of my standing up, so that the only way was to lie down on my side, with my back against that of the cage—of course making myself as much like a *bas-relief* as possible.

Fortunately, my coat was closely buttoned up to the throat, for the hitch of a claw in a lappel would have been fatal: as it was, the paw of the brute, in some of his sweeps, came within two inches of my

person. Foiled in this fishing for me, he then struck the bars, seriatim, but they were too massive, and too well inbedded in their sockets, to break, or bend, or give way. Nevertheless, I felt far from safe. There was such a diabolical sagacity in the Beast's proceedings, that it would hardly have been wonderful if he had deliberately undone the bolt and fastenings of his late front-door and walked in to me.

"Oh, how dreadful if he had! And what a position for you, sir! Such a shocking picture—a human fellow-creature in a cage with a great savage tiger a-tearing at him through the bars—I declare it reminds me of the Cat at our Canary!"

CHAPTER IX.

I would not marry the Young Lady who made that last comparison for Ten Thousand Pounds!

CHAPTER X.

Confound the Keepers!

Not one of them, Upper or Under, even looked into the room. For any help to me, they might as well have been keeping sheep, or turnpikes, or little farms, or the King's peace—or keeping the Keep at Windsor, or editing the Keepsake!—or

helping the London Sweeps and Jack-in-the-Green to keep May Day!

Oh! what a pang, sharp as tiger's tooth could inflict, shot through my heart as I remembered that date with all its cheerful and fragrant associations—sights, and scents, and sounds so cruelly different to the object before my eyes, the odour in my nostrils, the noise in my ears!

How I wished myself under the hawthorns, or even on them—how I yearned to be on a village-green, with or without a Maypole; but why do I speak of such sweet localities?

May-day as it was, and sweep as I was not, I would willingly have been up the foulest flue in London, cleansing it gratis. Fates that had formerly seemed black and hard, now looked white and mild in comparison with my own. The gloomiest things, the darkest misfortunes, even unto negro-slavery shone out, like the holiday sooterkins, *with washed faces.*

My own case was getting desperate. The Tiger enraged by his failures, was furious, and kept up an incessant fretful grumble—sometimes deepening into a growl, or rising almost into a shriek—while again and again he tried the bars, or swept for me with his claws. Lunch-time it was plain had come, and an appetite along with it, as appeared by his

efforts to get at me, as well as his frequently opening and shutting his jaws, and licking his lips, in fact making a sort of Barmecidal feast on me beforehand.

The effect of this mock mastication on my nerves was inexpressibly terrible—as the awful rehearsal of a real tragedy. Besides, from a correspondence of imagination, I seemed actually to feel in my flesh and bones every bite he simulated, and the consequent agonies. Oh, horrible — horrible — horrible !

"Horrible, indeed! I wonder you did not faint !"

Madam, I *dared* not. All my vigilance was too necessary to preserve me from those dangerous snatches, so often made suddenly as if to catch me off my guard. It was far more likely that the brain, overstrained by such intense excitement, would give way and drive me by some frantic impulse—a maniac—into those foamy jaws.

Still bolt, and bar, and reason, retained their places. But alas! if even the mind remained firm, the physical energies might fail. So long as I could maintain my position, as still and as stiff as a corpse, my life was comparatively safe: but the necessary effort was almost beyond the power of human nature, and certainly could not be long

protracted—the joints and sinews must relax, and then——

Merciful Heaven!—the crisis just alluded to was fast approaching, for the overtasked muscles were gradually give, give, giving—when suddenly there was a peculiar cry from some animal in the inner room. The Tiger answered it with a yell, and, as if reminded of some hated object—at least as obnoxious to him as myself—instantly dropped from the cage, and made one step towards the spot. But he stopped short—turning his face again to the cage, to which he would probably have returned but for a repetition of the same cry. The Tiger answered it as before with a yell of defiance, and bounded off through the door into the next chamber, whence growls, roars, and shrieks of brutal rage soon announced that some desperate combat had commenced.

The uproar alarming the Keepers, they rushed in, when springing from the cage with equal alacrity, I rushed out; and while the men were securing the Tiger, secured myself by running home to my house in the Adelphi, at a rate never attained before or since.

Nor did Time, who "travels in divers paces with divers persons," ever go at so extraordinary a rate—*for slowness*—as he had done with me. On con-

sulting my watch, the *age* which I had passed in the Tiger's den must have been some sixty minutes!

And so ended, Courteous Reader, the Longest Hour in my Life!

PIROUETTES.

"DON'T tell me," said my uncle, "of your Operatives (he meant Opera-dancers) who spin about like teetotums or peg-tops. I am for none of your whirligigs. It is a mere *tour de force*, to show how many revolutions they can make on one leg; and nine times in ten the performer, especially a male one, shows by his face, at the conclusion, what a physical exertion it has been. The best dancers are sparing of such manœuvres; for they know that any appearance of effort is fatal to Grace. When I say the best dancers, I mean such Artistes as Taglioni, and others of the same school; who, by the way, always seemed to me to deserve the same encomium that King Solomon bestowed on the lilies—*they* TOIL *not, neither do they* SPIN.

AN UNDERTAKER

Is an Illwiller to the Human Race. He is by Profession an Enemy to his Species, and can no more look kindly at his Fellows than the Sheriff's Officer; for why, his Profit begins with an Arrest for the Debt of Nature. As the Bailiff looks on a failing Man so doth he, and with the same Hope, namely, to take the Body.

Hence hath he little Sympathy with his Kind, small Pity for the Poor, and least of all for the Widow and the Orphan, whom he regards, Planter like, but as so many Blacks on his Estate. If he have any Community of Feeling, it is with the Sexton, who has likewise a Per Centage on the Bills of Mortality, and never sees a Picture of Health but he longs to ingrave it. Both have the same quick Ear for a Churchyard Cough, and both the same Relish for the same Music, to wit, the Toll of Saint Sepulchre. Moreover both go constantly in black—howbeit 'tis no Mourning Suit but a Livery—for he grieves no more for the Defunct than the Bird of the same Plumage, that is the Undertaker to a dead Horse.

As a Neighbour he is to be shunned. To live

opposite to him is to fall under the Evil Eye. Like the Witch that forespeaks other Cattle, he would rot you as soon as look at you, if it could be done at a Glance; but that Magic being out of Date, he contents himself with choosing the very Spot on the House Front that shall serve for a Hatchment. Thenceforward he watches your going out and your coming in: your rising up and your lying down, and all your Domestic Imports of Drink and Victual, so that the veriest She Gossip in the Parish is not more familiar with your Modes and Means of Living, nor knows so certainly whether the Visiter, that calls daily in his Chariot, is a mere Friend or a Physician. Also he knows your Age to a Year, and your Height to an Inch, for he hath measured you with his Eye for a Coffin, and your Ponderosity to a Pound, for he hath an Interest in the Dead Weight, and hath so far inquired into your Fortune as to guess with what Equipage you shall travel on your last Journey. For, in professional Curiosity, he is truly a *Pall* Pry. Wherefore to dwell near him is as melancholy as to live in view of a Churchyard; to be within Sound of his Hammering is to hear the Knocking at Death's Door.

To be friends with an Undertaker is as impossible as to be the Crony of a Crocodile. He is by Trade a Hypocrite, and deals of Necessity in

Mental Reservations and Equivoques. Thus he drinks to your good Health, but hopes, secretly, it will not endure. He is glad to find you so hearty—as to be Apoplectic; and rejoices to see you so stout—with a short Neck. He bids you beware of your old Gout—and recommends a Quack Doctor. He laments the malignant Fever so prevalent—and wishes you may get it. He compliments your Complexion—when it is Blue or Yellow: admires your upright Carriage,—and hopes it will break down. Wishes you good Day, but means everlasting Night; and commends his Respects to your Father and Mother—but hopes you do not honour them. In short, his good Wishes are treacherous; his Inquiries are suspicious; and his Civilities are dangerous; as when he proffereth the Use of his Coach—or to see you Home.

For the rest, he is still at odds with Humanity; at constant Issue with its Naturalists, and its Philanthropists, its Sages, its Counsellors, and its Legislators. For example, he praises the Weather—with the Wind at East; and rejoices in a wet Spring and Fall, for Death and he reap with one Sickle, and have a good or a bad Harvest in common. He objects not to Bones in Bread (being as it were his own Diet), nor to ill Drugs in Beer, nor to

Sugar of Lead or arsenical Finings in Wine, nor to ardent Spirits, nor to Interment in Churches. Neither doth he discountenance the Sitting on Infants; nor the swallowing of Plum Stones; nor of cold Ices at Hot balls—nor the drinking of Embrocations, nay he hath been known to contend that the wrong Dose was the right one. He approves, *contra* the Physicians, of a damp Bed, and wet Feet,—of a hot Head and cold Extremities, and lends his own Countenance to the Natural Small Pox, rather than encourage Vaccination—which he calls flying in the Face of Providence. Add to these, a free Trade in Poisons, whereby the Oxalic Crystals may currently become Proxy for the Epsom ones; and the corrosive Sublimate as common as Salt in Porridge. To the same End he would give unto every Cockney a Privilege to shoot, within ten miles round London, without a Taxed Licence, and would never concur in a Fine or Deodand for Fast Driving, except the Vehicle were a Hearse. Thus, whatever the popular Cry, he runs counter: a Heretic in Opinion, and a Hypocrite in Practice, as when he pretends to be sorrowful at a Funeral; or, what is worse, affects to pity the ill-paid Poor, and yet helpeth to screw them down.

To conclude, he is a Personage of ill presage to the House of Life: a Raven on the Chimney Pot

—a Deathwatch in the Wainscot,—a Winding Sheet in the Candle. To meet with him is ominous. His Looks are sinister; his Dress is lugubrious; his Speech is prophetic; and his Touch is mortal. Nevertheless he hath one Merit, and in this our World, and in these our Times, it is a main one; namely, that whatever he *Undertakes* he *Performs*.

A FIRST ATTEMPT IN RHYME.

"The attempt and not the deed."—*Lady Macbeth.*

A FEW days since it happened to me to look into a Lady's Album—one of those pretty nuisances which are sent to one like the Taxgatherer's Schedules, with a blank or two for the victim to fill up. The Book was of the usual kind: superbly bound of course, and filled with paper of various tints and shades, to suit the taste of the contributors:—baiting, one might fancy, with a bluish tinge for Lady Chatterton, with a light green for Mrs. Hall, or Miss Mitford, and with a French white for Miss Costello—for Moore with a flesh colour, with gray for the Bard of Memory, and with rose colour for the Poet of Hope—with stone colour for Allan Cunningham, with straw colour for the Corn Law Rhymer, with drab and slate for Bernard Barton and the Howitts, and with a sulphur tint for Satan Montgomery. The copper colour being, perhaps, aimed at the artists in general, who are partial to the warmth of its tone.

As yet, however, but few of our "celebrated pens" and pencils had enriched or ornamented the volume. The literary offerings were short and few; and the pictorial ones were still more rare. Thus between the Mendicant begging for Scraps in

the Frontispiece, and a water-coloured branch of Fuchsia, there were no less than eighteen blank leaves: twenty-two more from the flower to the Group of Shells—if they *were* shells—for they looked more like petrifactions of a crackniel, a French roll, and a twist—and fifteen barren pages from the Conchology to the great Parrot—which, by the bye, seemed purposely to have been put into the same livery as the lady's footman, namely, a peagreen coat, with crimson smalls. There was only one more drawing; a view of some Dutch place, done in Sepia, and which some wag had named in pencil as "a Piece of Brown Holland."

The prose and verse were of the ordinary character: Extracts from Byron, Wordsworth, and Mrs. Hemans; a Parody of an Irish Melody, an Unpublished Ballad, attributed to Sir Walter Scott, and sundry original effusions, including a Sonnet of sixteen lines, to an Infant. There were also two specimens of what is called Religious Poetry—the one working up a Sprig of Thyme into an "ETERNITY!" and the other setting out as jauntily as a Song, but ending in a "HIM."

In glancing over these effusions, it was my good fortune to be attracted to some verses by a certain singularity in their construction, the nature of which it required a second perusal to determine. Indeed, the peculiarity was so unobtrusive, that it

had escaped the notice of the owner of the Album, who had even designated the lines in question as "nothing particular." They were, she said, as the title implied, the first attempt in rhyme, by a female friend; and who, to judge from her manner and expressions, with respect to her maiden essay, had certainly not been aware of any thing extraordinary in her performance. On the contrary, she had apologized for the homely and common-place character of the lines, and had promised, if she ever improved in her poetry, to contribute another and a better sample. A pledge which Death, alas! had forbidden her to redeem.

As a Literary Curiosity, the Proprietress of the original Poem has kindly allowed me to copy and present it to the Public. Instead of a mere commonplace composition, the careful Reader will perceive that whilst aiming at, and so singularly missing, what Garrick called "the jingle of verse," the Authoress has actually invented a New Species of Poetry—an intermediate link, as it were, between Blank Verse and Rhyme, and as such likely to be equally acceptable to the admirers of Thomson and the lovers of Shenstone.

(COPY.)

If I were used to writing verse,
And had a Muse not so perverse,
But prompt at Fancy's call to spring
And carol like a bird in Spring;

Or like a Bee, in summer time,
That hums about a bed of thyme,
And gathers honey and delights
From ev'ry blossom where it 'lights;
If I, alas! had such a Muse,
To touch the Reader or amuse,
And breathe the true poetic vein,
This page should not be fill'd in vain!
But ah! the pow'r was never mine
To dig for gems in Fancy's mine;
Or wander over land and main
To seek the Fairies' old domain—
To watch Apollo while he climbs
His throne in oriental climes;
Or mark the "gradual dusky veil"
Drawn over Tempé's tuneful vale,
In classic lays remembered long—
Such flights to bolder wings belong;
To Bards who on that glorious height
Of sun and song, Parnassus hight,
Partake the fire divine that burns
In Milton, Pope, and Scottish Burns,
Who sang his native braes and burns.

For me, a novice strange and new,
Who ne'er such inspiration knew,
But weave a verse with travail sore,
Ordain'd to creep and not to soar,
A few poor lines alone I write,
Fulfilling thus a friendly rite,
Not meant to meet the Critic's eye,
For oh! to hope from such as I,
For any thing that's fit to read,
Were trusting to a broken reed!

1*st of April*, 1840. E. M. G.

HORSE AND FOOT.

Fain would I climbe
But that I fear to fall.
SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

IT requires some degree of moral courage to make such a confession, for a horse-laugh will assuredly take place at my expense, but I never could sit on any thing with four legs, except a chair, a table, or a sofa. Possibly my birthplace was adverse, not being raised in Yorkshire, with its three Ridings—perhaps my education was in fault, for of course I was put to my feet like other children, but I do not remember being ever properly taken off them in the riding-school. It is not unlikely that my passion for sailing has been inimical to the accomplishment; there is a roll about a vessel so different from the pitch of a horse, that a person accustomed to a fore and aft sea-saw, or side lurch, is utterly disconcerted by a regular up-and-down motion—at any rate, seamen are notorious for riding at anchor better than at any

thing else. Finally, the Turk's principle, Predestination, may be accountable for my inaptitude. One man is evidently born under what Milton calls a "mounted sign," whilst another comes into the world under the influence of Aries, predoomed to perform on no saddle but one of mutton. Thus we see one gentleman who can hardly keep his seat upon a pony, or a donkey; when another shall turn and wind a fiery Pegasus, or back a Bucephalus; to say nothing of those professional equestrians, who tumble *on* a horse instead of *off*. It has always seemed to me, therefore, that our Astleys and Ducrows, whether they realized fortunes or not, deserved to do so, besides obtaining more honorary rewards. It would not, perhaps, have been out of character, if they had been made Knights of, or Cavaliers; especially considering that many Mayors, Aldermen, and Sheriffs have been so dubbed, whose pretensions never stood on more than two legs, and sometimes scarcely on one.

The truth is, I have always regarded horsemen with something of the veneration with which the savages beheld, for the first time, the Spanish chivalry—namely, as superior beings. With all respect then to our gallant Infantry, I have always looked on our Cavalry as a grade above them—

indeed, the feat of Widdrington, who "fought upon his stumps," and so far, on his own legs, has always appeared to me comparatively easy, whereas for a charge of cavalry,

> Charge, Chester, charge.
> *Off*, Stanley, *off*,

has always seemed to me the most natural reading.

The chase of course excites my admiration and wonder, and like Lord Chesterfield I unfeignedly marvel—but for a different reason—that any gentleman ever goes to it a second time. A chapter of Nimrod's invariably gives me a crick in the neck. I can well believe that "it is the pace that kills," but why rational beings with that conviction should ride to be killed exceeds my comprehension. For my own part could such a pace ever come into fashion, it would be suicidal in me to attempt to hunt at a trot, or even in a walk. Ride and tie, perhaps, if, as I suppose, it means one's being tied on—but no, my evil genius would evade even that security.

Above all, but for certain visits to Epsom and Ascot I should have set down horse-racing as a pleasant fiction. That Buckle, without being buckled on, should have reached the age he

attained to—or that Day should have had so long a day—are to my mind "remarkable instances of longevity" far more wonderful than any recorded in the newspapers. How a jockey can bestride, and what is more, start with one of those thoroughbred steeds, is to me a standing, or rather running, or rather flying miracle. Were I a Robinson or a Rogers, I should certainly think of the plate as a coffin-plate, and that the stakes were such as those that were formerly driven through self-murderers' bodies.

It would appear, then, that a rider, like a poet, must be born and not made—that there are two races of men as differently fated as the silver-spooned and the wooden-ladled—some coming into the world, so to speak, at *Ryde*, others, like myself, at *Footscray*, and thus by necessity, equestrians or pedestrians. In fact, to corroborate this theory, there is the Championship, which being hereditary, is at least one instance of a gentleman being ordained to horseback from his birth. As to me, instead of retrograding through Westminster Hall on Cato, I must have backed out of the office.

It is probable, however, that beside the causes already enumerated, something of my inaptitude may be due to my profession. It has been remarked elsewhere as to riding, that "sedentary

persons seldom have a good seat," and literary men generally appear to have been on a par, as to Horsemanship, with the sailors. The Author of "Paul Pry," in an extremely amusing paper,* has recorded his own quadrupedal mischances. Coleridge, for a similar or a still greater incapacity, was discharged from a dragoon regiment. Lamb avowedly never went "horse-pickaback" in his life. Byron, for all his ambition to be thought a bold cavalier, and in spite of his own hints on the subject, appears to have been but an indifferent performer—and Sir Walter Scott, as we read in his life, tumbled from his galloway, and Sir Humphry Davy jumped over him. Even Shakspeare, as far as we have any account of his knowledge of horses, never got beyond holding them. Lord Chesterfield has described Doctor Johnson's appearance in the saddle; but the catalogue would be too tedious. Suffice it, if riding be the "poetry of motion," authors excel rather in its prose.

To affirm, however, that I never ventured on the quadruped in question would be beside the truth, having a dim notion of once getting astride a Shetland pony in my boyhood, but how or where it carried me, or how I sat, if I did sit on it for

* A Cockney's Rural Sports.

any distance, is in blank, having been picked up insensible within twenty yards of the door. I have a distinct recollection however of mounting a full-grown mahogany-coloured animal of the same genus, after coming to man's estate, which I may be pardoned for relating, as it was my only performance of the kind.

It was during my first unfortunate courtship, when I had the brief happiness of three weeks' visit at the residence of the lady's father in the county of Suffolk. I had made considerable progress, I flattered myself, in the affections of his "eldest daughter," when alas! a letter arrived from London, which summoned me on urgent business to the metropolis. There was no neat postchaise to be procured in the neighbourhood, nor indeed any other vehicle on account of the election; and my host kindly pressed upon me the use of one of his saddle-horses to carry me to the next market-town, where I should meet the mail. The urgency of the case induced me to accede to the proposal, and with feelings that all lovers will duly estimate, I took leave of my adored Honoria.

She evidently felt the parting—we might not meet again for an age, or even two or three ages, *alias* weeks, and to be candid, I fully participated

in her feelings of anxiety, and something more, considering the perilous nature of the expedition. But the Horse came, and the last adieus—no, not the last, for the animal having merely taken me an airing, across a country of his own choosing, at last brought me back of his own head, for I was unable to direct it, safe to the house, or rather to the door of his own stable. At the time, despite some over-severe raillery, I rather enjoyed the untoward event; but on mature reflection, I have since found reason to believe that the change which afterwards took place in the young lady's sentiments towards me, was greatly attributable to my equestrian failure. The popular novel of "Rob Roy" made its appearance soon afterwards, and along with a certainly over-fervent admiration of its heroine, Di Vernon, a notable horsewoman, it is not improbable that Honoria imbibed something of an opposite feeling towards her humble servant who was only a Foot-Man.

Since then, I have contrived to get married, to a lady of a more pedestrian taste; an escape from celibacy that might have been more difficult had my bachelorship endured till a reign when the example of the Sovereign has made riding so fashionable an exercise with the fair sex. Indeed, I have invariably found that every female but one,

whom I might have liked or loved, was a capital horsewoman. How other timid or inapt gentlemen are to procure matrimonial partners, is a problem that remains to be solved. They must seek companions, as W. says, in the humbler *walks* of life. Poor W.! He was deeply devotedly attached to a young lady of family and fortune, to whom he was not altogether indifferent, but he could not ride out with her on horseback, and the captain could, which determined her choice. The rejected lover has had a twist in his brain and a warp in his temper ever since: but his bitterness, instead of falling on the sex as usual, has settled on the whole equine race. He hates them all, from the steed of sixteen hands high down to the Shetland pony, and insists, against Mr. Thomas, and his Brutally-Humane Society, that horses are never ill-used. There is a "bit of raw" in his own bosom that has made him regard their galled withers with indifference: a sore at his heart which has made him callous to their sufferings. They deserve all they get. The Dog is man's best friend, he says, and the horse his worst.

* * * *

Since writting the above, word has been brought to me that poor W. is no more. He deceased

suddenly, and the report says, of apoplexy; but I know better. His death was caused, indeed, by *a full habit*—but it was *a blue one.*

EPIGRAM,

ON THE CHINESE TREATY.

Our wars are ended—foreign battles cease,—
Great Britain owns an universal peace;
And Queen Victoria triumphs over all,
Still "*Mistress of herself though China fall!*

THE SEASON.

SUMMER's gone and over!
Fogs are falling down;
And with russet tinges
Autumn's doing brown.

Boughs are daily rifled
By the gusty thieves,
And the Book of Nature
Getteth short of leaves.

Round the tops of houses,
Swallows, as they flit,
Give, like yearly tenants,
Notices to quit.

Skies, of fickle temper,
Weep by turns, and laugh—
Night and Day together
Taking half-and-half.

So September endeth—
Cold, and most perverse—
But the Month that follows,
Sure will pinch us worse!

MR. WITHERING'S CONSUMPTION AND ITS CURE.

A DOMESTIC EXTRAVAGANZA.

Come away, come away, death
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, all stuck with yew,
Oh, prepare it!

TWELFTH NIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

"AND who was Mr. Withering?"

Mr. Withering, Gentle Reader, was a drysalter of Dowgate-hill. Not that he dealt in salt, dry or wet —or, as you might dream, in dry salt stockfish, ling, and Findon haddies, like the salesmen in Thames-street. The commodities in which he trafficked, wholesale, were chiefly drugs, and dyewoods, a business whereby he had managed to accumulate a moderate fortune. His character was unblemished,—his habits regular and domestic,—but although advanced in years beyond the middle age, he was still a bachelor.

"And consumptive? Why then according to Dr. Imray's book, he had hair of a light colour, large blue eyes, long eyelashes, white and regular teeth, long fingers, with the nails contracted or curved, a slender figure, and a fair and blooming countenance."

Not exactly, miss. Mr. Withering was rather dark—

"Oh yes—as the doctor says, the tuberculous constitution is not confined to persons of sanguineous temperaments and fair complexion. It also belongs to those of a very different appearance. The subjects of this affection are often of a swarthy and dark complexion, with coarse skin, dark hair, long dark eyelashes, black eyes, thick upper lip, short fingers, broad nails, and a more robust habit of body, with duller intellect, and a careless or less active disposition."

Nay, that is still not Mr. Withering. To tell the truth, he was not at all like a consumptive subject:—not pigeon-breasted, but broad chested —not emaciated, but plump as a partridge—not hectic in colour, but as healthily ruddy as a redstreak apple—not languid, but as brisk as a bee, —in short, a comfortable little gentleman, of the Pickwick class, with something, perhaps, quizzical, but nothing phthisical in his appearance.

"Why, then, what was the matter with the man?"

A decline, madam. Not the rapid decay of nature, so called, but one of those declines which an unfortunate lover has sometimes to endure from the lips of a cruel beauty; for Mr. Withering, though a steady, plodding man of business, in his warehouse or counting-house, was, in his parlour or study, a rather romantic and sensitive creature, with a strong turn for the sentimental, which had been nourished by his course of reading—chiefly in the poets, and especially such as dealt in Love Elegies, like his favourite Hammond. Not to forget Shenstone, whom, in common with many readers of his standing, he regarded as a very nightingale of sweetness and pathos in expressing the tendor passion. Nay, he even ventured occasionally to clothe his own amatory sentiments in verse, and in sundry poems painted his torments by flames and darts, and other instruments of cruelty, so shockingly, that, but for certain allegorical touches, he might have been thought to be describing the ingenious torture of some poor white captive by a red Indian squaw.

But, alas! his poetry, original or borrowed, was of no more avail than his plain prose against that petrifaction which he addressed as a heart, in the

bosom of Miss Puckle. He might as well have tried to move all Flintshire by a geological essay; or to have picked his way with a toothpick into a Fossil Saurian. The obdurate lady had a soul above trade, and the offer of the drysalter and lover, with his dying materials in either line, was met by what is called a *flat* refusal, though it sounded, rather, as if set in a *sharp*.

Now in such cases it is usual for the Rejected One to go into something or other, the nature of which depends on the temperament and circumstances of the individual, and I will give you six guesses, Gentle Reader, as to what it was that Mr. Withering went into when he was refused by Miss Puckle.

"Into mourning?"

No.

"Into a tantrum?"

No.

"Into the Serpentine?"

No—nor into the Thames, to sleep in peace in Bugsby's Hole.

"Into the Army or Navy?"

No.

"Into a madhouse?"

No.

"Into a Hermitage?"

No—nor into a Monastery.

The truth is, he opportunely remembered that his father's great aunt, Dinah, after a disappointment in love, was carried off by Phthisis Pulmonalis; and as the disease is hereditary, he felt, morally as well as physically and grammatically, that he must, would, could, should, and ought to go like a true Withering into a Consumption.

"And did he, sir?"

He did, miss;—and so resolutely, that he sold off his business, at a sacrifice, and retired, in order to devote the rest of his life to dying for Amanda—*alias* Miss Susan Puckle. And a long job it promised to be, for he gloried in dying very hard, and in pining for her, which of course is not to be done in a day. And truly, instead of a lover's going off, at a pop, like Werter, it must be much more satisfactory to a cruel Beauty, to see her victim deliberately expiring by inches, like a Dolphin, and dying of as many hues,—now crimson with indignation, then looking blue with despondence, anon yellow with jaundice, or green with jealousy—at last fading into a melancholy mud-colour, and thence darkening into the black tinge of despair and death. It is said, indeed, that when the cruel Miss Puckle was informed of his dying for her, she exclaimed, "Oh! I hope he will let me *crimp* him first,—like a skate!"

CHAPTER II.

"But did Mr. Withering actually go into a consumption?"

As certainly, miss, as a passenger steps of his own accord into an omnibus that is going to Gravesend. He had been refused, and had a strong sentimental impression that all the Rejected and Forsaken Martyrs of true love were carried off, sooner or later, by the same insidious disease. Accordingly his first step was to remove from the too keen air of Pentonville, to the milder climate of Brompton, where he took a small detached house, adapted to the state of single unblessedness, to which he was condemned. For with all his conviction of the propriety, or necessity of the catastrophe, his dying for love did not involve a love for dying; he might soon have to breathe his last, but it should be of a fine air.

His establishment consisted but of two female servants; namely, a housemaid, and a middle-aged woman, at once cook, housekeeper, and nurse, who professedly belonged to a consumptive family, and therefore knew what was good or bad, or neither, for all pulmonary complaints. Her name was Button.

She was tall, large-boned, and hard-featured; with a loud voice, a stern eye, and the decided manner of a military sergeant—a personage adapted, and in fact accustomed, to rule much more refractory patients than her master. It did not indeed require much persuasion to induce him to take to wear

"flannin next his skin," or woollen comforters round his throat and wrists, or even a hareskin on his chest in an east wind. He was easily led to adopt cork soles and clogs against wet, and a great-coat in cold weather—nay, he was even out-talked into putting his jaw into one of those hideous contrivances called Respirators. But this was nothing. He was absolutely compelled to give up all animal food and fermented liquors—to renounce successively his joint, his steak, his chop, his chicken, his calves' feet, his drop of brandy, his gin-and-water, his glass of wine, his bottled porter, his draught ditto, and his ale, down to that bitter pale sort, that he used to call his *Bass* relief. No, he was not even allowed to taste the table-beer. He had promised to be consumptive, and Mrs. Button took him at his word. As much light pudding, sago, arrow-root, tapioca—or gruel—with toast-and-water, barley-water, whey, or apple-tea, as often as he pleased—but as to meat or "stimuluses," she would as soon give him "Alick's Acid, or Corrosive Supplement."

To this dietary dictation, the patient first demurred, but soon submitted. Nothing is more fascinating or dangerous to a man just rejected by a female, than the show of kindness by another of the sex. It restores him to his self-love—nay, to

his very self,—reverses the sentence of social excommunication just pronounced against him, and contradicts the moral annihilation implied in the phrase of being "nothing to nobody." A secret well known to the sex, and which explains how so many unfortunate gentlemen, crossed in love, happen to marry the housemaid, the cook, or any kind creature in petticoats—the first Sister of Charity, black, brown, or carroty, who cares a cus—

"Oh!—"

—a custard for their appetite, or a comforter for their health. Even so with Mr. Withering. He had offered himself from the top of his Brutus to the sole of his shoe to Miss Puckle, who had plumply told him that he was not worth having as a gift. And yet, here—in the very depth of his humiliation, when he would hardly have ventured to bequeath his rejected body to an anatomical lecturer—here was a female, not merely caring for his person in general, but for parts of it in particular—his poor throat and his precious chest, his delicate trachea, his irritable bronchial tubes, and his tender lungs. Nevertheless, no onerous tax was imposed on his gratitude; the only return required—and how could he refuse it!—was his taking a Temperance, or rather Total Abstinence Pledge for his own benefit. So he supped his semi-solids and swallowed his slops; merely re-

marking on one occasion, after a rather rigorous course of barley-water, that if his consumption increased he thought he should "try *Madeira*," but whether the island, or the wine, he left in doubt.

CHAPTER III.

In the meantime Mr. Withering continued as plump as a partridge, and as rosy as a redstreak apple. No symptoms of the imputed disease made their appearance. He slept well, ate well of sago, &c., drank well of barley-water and the like, and shook hands with a palm not quite so hard and dry as a dead Palm of the Desert. He had neither hectic flushes nor shortness of breath—nor yet pain in the chest, to which three several physicians in consultation applied their stethoscopes.

Doctor A.—hearing nothing at all.

Doctor B.—Nothing particular.

Dr. C.—Nothing wrong.

And Doctor E. distinctly hearing a cad-like voice, proclaiming "all right."

Mr. Withering, nevertheless, was dying—if not of consumption, of *ennui*—the mental weariness of which he mistook for the physical lassitude so characteristic of the other disease. In spite, therefore, of the faculty, he clung to the poetical theory that he was a blighted drysalter, withering prematurely

on his stem; another victim of unrequited love, whom the utmost care could retain but a few short months from his cold grave. A conviction he expressed to posterity in a series of Petrarchian sonnets, and in plain prose to his housekeeper, who only insisted the more rigidly on what she called her "regimental rules" for his regimen, with the appropriate addition of Iceland Moss. A recipe to which he quietly submitted, though obstinately rejecting another prescription of provincial origin —namely, snails beaten up with milk. In vain she told him from her own experience in Flanders, that they were reckoned not only nourishing but relishing by the Belgians, who after chopping them up with bread crumbs and sweet herbs, broiled them in the shells, in each of which a small hole was made, to enable the Flemish epicure to blow out the contents.* Her master decisively set his face against the experiment, alleging plausibly enough, that the operation of snails must be too slow for any galloping complaint.

There was, however, one experiment, of which on his own recommendation Mr. Withering resolved to make a trial—change of air, of course involving change of scene. Accordingly, packing his best

* The origin perhaps of the vulgar phrase, "a good blow out."

suit and a few changes of linen in his carpet-bag, he took an inside place in the Hastings coach, and was whirled down ere night to that favourite Cinque Port. And for the first fortnight, thanks to the bracing yet mild air of the place, which gave tone to his nerves, without injury to his chest, the result exceeded his most sanguine expectations. But alas! he was doomed to a relapse, a revulsion so severe, that, in a more advanced stage of his complaint he ought to have "gone out like a snuff."

"What, from wet feet, or a damp bed?"

No, madam—but from a promenade, with dry soles, on a bright day in June, and in a balmy air that would not have injured a lung of lawn-paper.

CHAPTER IV.

Poor Mr. Withering!

Happy for him had he but walked in any other direction—up to the Castle, or down to the beach—had he only bent his steps westward to Harlington, or Bexhill, or eastward to Fairlight,—or to the Fish-ponds—but his sentimental bias would carry him towards Lover's Seat,—and there—on the seat itself—he beheld his lost Amanda, or rather Miss Puckle, or still more properly, Mrs. Scrimgeour, who, with her bridegroom, had come to spend the

honeymoon at green Hastings. The astounded Drysalter stood aghast and agape at the unexpected encounter; but the lady, cold and cutting as the East wind, vouchsafed no sign of recognition.

The effect of this meeting was a new shock to his system. He felt, at the very moment, that he had a hectic flush, hot and cold fits, with palpitation of the heart,—and his disease set in again with increased severity. Yes, he was a doomed man, and might at once betake himself to the last resource of the consumptive.

"Not," he said, "not that all the ass's milk in England would ever lengthen his years."

Impressed with this conviction, and heartily disgusted with Hastings, he repacked his carpet-bag, and returned by the first coach to London, fully convinced, whatever the pace of the Rocket, or the nature of the road, that he was going very fast, and all down hill.

CHAPTER V.

It was about ten o'clock at night when Mr. Withering arrived at his own residence in Brompton; but although there was a light in the parlour, a considerable time elapsed before he could obtain admittance.

At last, after repeated knockings and ringings,

the street-door opened, and disclosed Mrs. Button, who welcomed her master with an agitation which he attributed at once to his unexpected return, and the marked change for the worse, which of course was visible in his face.

"Yes, you may well be shocked—but here, pay the coachman and shut the door, for I'm in a draught. You may well be shocked and alarmed, for I'm looking, I know, like death,—but bless me, Mrs Button, the house smells very savoury!"

"It's the drains as you sniff, sir," said the Housekeeper; "they always do smell strongish afore rain."

"Yes, we shall have wet weather, I believe—and it may be the drains—though I never smelt anything in my life so like fried beef-steaks and onions!"

"Why, then, to tell the truth," said Mrs. Button, "it *is* beef and inguns; it's a favourite dish of mine, and as you're forbid animal food, I thought I'd jest treat myself, in your absence, so as not to tantalize you with the smell."

"Very good, Mrs. Button, and very considerate. Though with your lungs, I hardly approve of hot suppers. But there seems to me another smell about the house,—yes—most decidedly—the smell of tobacco."

"Oh, that's the plants!" exclaimed the Housekeeper—"the geranums that I've been smoking,—they were eaten up alive with green animalculuses."

"Humph!" said Mr. Withering, who, snuffing about like a spaniel, at last made a point at the Housekeeper herself.

"It's very odd—very odd, indeed—but there is a sort of perfume about *you*, Mrs. Button—not exactly lavender or Eau de Cologne—but more like the smell of liquor."

"Law, sir!" exclaimed the Housekeeper, with a rather hysterical chuckle, "the sharp nose that you have sure*ly!* Well, sure enough the tobacco-smoke did make me squeamish, and I sent out for a small quantity of arduous spirits just to settle my stomach. But never mind the luggage, sir, I'll see to that, while you go up to the drawing-room and the sofy, for you do look like death, and that's the truth."

And suiting her actions to her words, she tried to hustle her master towards the staircase; but his suspicions were now excited, and making a piglike dodge round his driver, he bolted into the parlour, where he beheld a spectacle that fully justified his misgivings.

"Lord! what did he see, sir?"

Nothing horrible, madam; only a cloth laid for supper, with plates, knives, and forks, and tumblers for two. At one end of the table stood a foaming

quart-pot of porter; at the other a black bottle, labelled "Cream of the Valley," while in the middle was a large dish of smoking hot beefsteaks and onions. For a minute he wondered who was to be the second party at the feast, till, guided by a reflection in the looking-glass, he turned towards the parlour-door, behind which, bolt upright and motionless as waxwork, he saw a man, as the old song says,

Where nae man should be.

"Heyday! Mrs. Button, whom have we here?"

"If you please, sir," replied the abashed Housekeeper, "it's only a consumptious brother of mine, as is come up to London for physical advice."

"Humph!" said Mr. Withering, with a significant glance towards the table, "and I trust that in the mean time you have advised him to abstain, like your master, from animal food and stimulants."

"Why you see, sir, begging your pardon," stammered Mrs. Button, "there's differences in constitutions. Some people requires more nourishing than others. Besides, there's two sorts of consumption."

"Yes, so I see," retorted Mr. Withering; "the one preys on your vitals and the other on your victuals."

Just at this moment a scrap of paper on the carpet attracted his eye, and at the same time catching that of Mrs. Button, and both parties making an attempt together to pick it up, their heads came into violent collision.

"It's only the last week's butcher's bill," said the Housekeeper, rubbing her forehead.

"I see it is," said the master, rubbing the top of his head with one hand, whilst with the bill in the other, he ran through the items, from beef to veal,

and from veal to mutton, boggling especially at the joints.

"Why, zounds! ma'am, your legs run very large!"

"My legs, sir?"

"Well, then, *mine*, as I pay for them. Here's one I see of eleven pounds, and another of ten and a half. I really think my two legs, cold one day and hashed the next, might have dined you through the week, without four pounds of my chops!"

"Your chops, sir?"

"Yes, my chops, woman,—and if I had not dropped in, you and your consumptive brother there would be supping on my steaks. You would eat me up alive?"

"You forget, sir," muttered the Housekeeper, "there's a nousemaid."

"Forget the devil!" bellowed Mr. Withering, fairly driven beyond his patience, and out of his temper, by different provocatives; for all this time the fried beef and onions,—one of the most savoury of dishes,—had been steaming under his nose, suggesting rather annoying comparisons between the fare before him and his own diet.

"Yes, here have I been starving these two months on spoon victuals and slops, while my servants, my precious servants,—confound them! were

feasting on the fat of the land! Yes, you, woman! you—with your favourite dishes,—my fried steaks, and my boiled legs, and my broiled chops, but forbidding *me—me* your master,—to dine even on my own kidneys, or my own sweetbread! But if I'll be consumptive any longer I'll be ———"

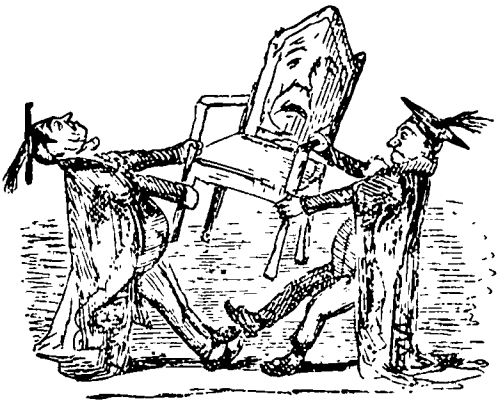
The last word of the sentence, innocent or profane, was lost in the loud slam of the street-door—for Mrs. Button's consumptive brother, disliking the turn of affairs, had quietly stolen out of the parlour, and made his escape from the house.

"And did Mr. Withering observe his vow?"

Most religiously, madam. Indeed, after dismissing Mrs. Button with her "regimental rules," he went rather to the opposite extreme, and dined and supped so heartily on his legs and shoulders, his breast and ribs, his loins, his heart, and liver, and his calf's head, and moreover washed them down so freely with wine, beer, and strong waters, that there was far more danger of his going out with an Apoplexy than of his going into a Consumption.

THE UNIVERSITY FEUD.

" A plague of both your Houses."—*Mercutio.*



THE Contest for the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford ought hardly to be passed over in silence. Indeed it was our original intention to have gone into the subject, whilst it might have been treated as a cause pertaining solely to the Belles Lettres, and equally unconnected with the great bells that ring in Protestant steeples, or the little bells that tinkle before papistical altars. There was a classical seat to be filled; and it would never have occurred to us to examine into the opinions of either candidate on abstruse questions of divinity, any more than at the new-bottoming of an old

chair, we should have inquired whether the rushes were to be supplied by the Lincolnshire Fens, or the Pontine Marshes. That any but poetical qualifications were to be considered would never have entered into our mind—we should as soon have dreamt of the Judge at a Cattle Show awarding the Premium, not to the fattest and best fed beast, but to an ox of a favourite colour. No—in our simplicity we should have summoned the rival Poets before us, in black and white, and made them give alternate specimens of their ability in the tuneful art, like Daphnis and Strephon in the Pastoral—

Then sing by turns, by turns the Muses sing:

and to the best of our humble judgment we should have awarded the Prize Chair, squabs, castors and all, to the melodious victor. As to demanding of either of the competitors what he thought of the Viaticum, or Extreme Unction, it would have seemed to us a far less pertinent question than to ask the would-be Chairman of a Temperance Society whether he preferred gin or rum. We should have considered the candidates, in fact, as Architects professing to "build the lofty rhyme," without supposing its possible connexion with the building of churches or chapels. In that character only should we have reviewed the parties before

us; and their several merits would have been discussed in an appropriate manner. Thus we might perhaps have pointed out that Mr. Garbett possessed the finer ear, but Mr. Williams the keener eye for the picturesque;—that the fellow of Brazen Nose had the greater command of language, but the Trinity man displayed a better assortment of images: and we might have particularized by quotations where the first reminded us of a Glover or a Butler, and the last of a Prior or a Pope.—We might also have deemed it our duty to examine into the acquaintance of the parties with the works of the Fathers, not of theology but of poetry; and it might have happened for us to inquire how certain probationary verses stood upon their feet—but certainly not the when, where, or wherefore, the author went down upon his knees. We should as soon have thought of examining a professed cook in circumnavigation, or a theatrical star in astronomy; or of proposing to an Irish chairman, of sedantary habits, to fill the disputed seat.

The truth is, that unlike a certain class of persons who would go to the pole for polemics, and seek an altercation at the altar, we have neither a turn nor a taste for religious disputation, and therefore never expected nor wished to find a theological controversy in a question of prosyversy. We

never conceived the suspicion that the Père La Chaise of Poetry might become a Confessor as well as a Professor, and initiate his classes in the mysteries of Rome, any more than we should have feared his converting them to the Polytheism of the heathen Ovid, or that very blind Pagan old Homer. On the contrary, our first inkling of a division at Oxford concerning the Muses suggested to us simply that it must be the old literary quarrel of the Classicists and the Romanticists, or a dispute perhaps on the claims of Blank Verses to get prizes. At any rate we should never have committed such an anachronism as to associate Poetry, which is older by some ages than Christianity, with either Protestantism or Popery. It would have been like jumbling up Noah of Ark with Joan of Arc, as man and wife!

Our first intentions, however, have been frustrated; for even while preparing for the task, as if by one of those magical transformations peculiar to the season, the Chair has turned into a Pulpit, and the rival collegians are transfigured—pantomime fashion—into Martin Luther and the Pope of Rome! Such a metamorphosis places the performance beyond our critical pale; but we will venture in a few sentences to deprecate religious dissension, and to forewarn such as call themselves

friends of the church against the probable interference of those hot-headed and warm-tempered individuals who seem, as the Irish gentleman said, to have been vaccinated from mad bulls. Such persons, may, doubtless, mean well; but the best-intentioned people have sometimes far more zeal than discretion, even as the medalsome Mathewite, who thinks that he must drink water *usque ad nauseam* in lieu of *usque ad baugh*; or like that over-humane lady, who feels so strongly against Capital Punishments and the gallows, that she would like to "hang Jack Ketch with her own hands." Let the breach then be stopped in time. The fate of a house divided against itself has been foretold; and surely there cannot be a more dangerous and destructive practice than where a crack presents itself to insert a wedge. It is by a parallel process that many a magnificent Sea-Palace has been broken up at Deptford—timber after timber, plank after plank, till nothing was left entire, perhaps, but the Figure-Head, staring, as only a figure-head can stare, at the conversion of a noble Ship, by continual split, split, splitting, into firewood, chips, and matches.

Seriously, then, we cannot discuss the University Feud in these pages: but our rules do not preclude us from giving some account of a Little Go

that seems to have been modelled on the great one, and which aptly serves to exemplify the evil influence of bad example in high places.

A ROW AT THE OXFORD ARMS.

Glorious Apollo from on high beheld us.
OLD SONG.

As latterly I chanced to pass
A Public House, from which, alas!
The Arms of Oxford dangle!
My ear was startled by a din,
That made me tremble in my skin,
A dreadful hubbub from within,
Of voices in a wrangle—
Voices loud, and voices high,
With now and then a party-cry,
Such as used in times gone by
To scare the British border;
When foes from North and South of Tweed—
Neighbours—and of Christian creed—
Met in hate to fight and bleed,
Upsetting Social Order.
Surpris'd, I turn'd me to the crowd,
Attracted by that tumult loud,
And ask'd a gazer, beetle-brow'd,
The cause of such disquiet.

When lo ! the solemn-looking man,
First shook his head on Burleigh's plan,
And then, with fluent tongue, began
His version of the riot :

A row !—why yes,—a pretty row, you might hear
from this to Garmany,
And what is worse, it's all got up among the Sons
of Harmony,
The more's the shame for them as used to be in
time and tune,
And all unite in chorus like the singing-birds in
June !
Ah ! many a pleasant chant I've heard in passing
here along,
When Swiveller was President a-knocking down a
song ;
But Dick's resign'd the post, you see, and all them
shouts and hollers
Is 'cause two other candidates, some sort of larned
scholars,
Are squabbling to be Chairman of the Glorious
Apollers !

Lord knows their names, I'm sure I don't, no more
than any yokel,
But I never heard of either as connected with the vocal ;

Nay, some do say, although of course the public rumour varies,
They've no more warble in 'em than a pair of hen canaries;
Though that might pass if they were dabs at t'other sort of thing,
For a man may make a song, you know, although he cannot sing;
But lork! it's many folk's belief they're only good at prosing,
For Catnach swears he never saw a verse of their composing;
And when a piece of poetry has stood its public trials,
If pop'lar, it gets printed off at once in Seven Dials,
And then about all sorts of streets, by every little monkey,
It's chanted like the "Dog's Meat Man," or "If I had a Donkey."
Whereas, as Mr. Catnach says, and not a bad judge neither,
No ballad worth a ha'penny has ever come from either,
And him as writ "Jim Crow," he says, and got such lots of dollars,
Would make a better Chairman for the Glorious Apollers.

Howsomever that's the meaning of the squabble that arouses
This neighbourhood, and quite disturbs all decent Heads of Houses,
Who want to have their dinners and their parties, as is reason,
In Christian peace and charity according to the season.
But from Number Thirty-Nine—since this electioneering job,
Ay, as far as Number Ninety, there's an everlasting mob;
Till the thing is quite a nuisance, for no creature passes by,
But he gets a card, a pamphlet, or a summut in his eye;
And a pretty noise there is!—what with canvassers and spouters,
For in course each side is furnish'd with its backers and its touters;
And surely among the Clergy to such pitches it is carried,
You can hardly find a Parson to get buried or get married;
Or supposing any accident that suddenly alarms,
If you're dying for a surgeon, you must fetch him from the "Arms:"

While the Schoolmasters and Tooters are neglecting
of their scholars,
To write about a Chairman for the Glorious Apollers.

Well, that, sir, is the racket; and the more the sin
and shame
Of them that help to stir it up, and propagate the
same;
Instead of vocal ditties, and the social flowing
cup,—
But they'll be the House's ruin, or the shutting of
it up,—
With their riots and their hubbubs, like a garden
full of bears,
While they've damaged many articles and broken lots
of squares,
And kept their noble Club Room in a perfect dust
and smother,
By throwing *Morning Heralds*, *Times*, and *Standards*
at each other;
Not to name the ugly language Gemmen oughtn't
to repeat,
And the names they call each other—for I've heard
'em in the street—
Such as Traitors, Guys, and Judases, and Vipers, and
what not,
For Pasley and his divers an't so blowing-up a lot.

And then such awful swearing!—for there's one of them that cusses
Enough to shock the cads that hang on opposition 'busses;
For he cusses every member that's agin him at the poll,
As I wouldn't cuss a donkey, tho' it hasn't got a soul;
And he cusses all their families, Jack, Harry, Bob or Jim,
To the babby in the cradle, if they don't agree with him.
Whereby, altho' as yet they have not took to use their fives,
Or, according as the fashion is, to sticking with their knives,
I'm bound there'll be some milling yet, and shakings by the collars,
Afore they choose a Chairman for the Glorious Apollers!

To be sure it is a pity to be blowing such a squall,
Instead of clouds, and every man his song, and then his call—
And as if there wasn't Whigs enough and Tories to fall out,
Besides politics in plenty for our splits to be about,—
Why, a cornfield is sufficient, sir, as anybody knows,
For to furnish them in plenty who are fond of picking crows—

Not to name the Maynooth Catholics, and other Irish stews,
To agitate society and loosen all its screws;
And which all may be agreeable and proper to their spheres,—
But it's not the thing for musicals to set us by the ears.
And as to College larning, my opinion for to broach,
And I've had it from my cousin, and he driv a college coach,
And so knows the University, and all as there belongs,
And he says that Oxford's famouser for sausages than songs,
And seldom turns a poet out like Hudson that can chant,
As well as make such ditties as the Free and Easies want,
Or other Tavern Melodists I can't just call to mind—
But it's not the classic system for to propagate the kind,
Whereby it so may happen as that neither of them Scholars
May be the proper Chairman for the Glorious Apollers!

For my part in the matter, if so be I had a voice,
It's the best among the vocalists I'd honour with the choice;
Or a Poet as could furnish a new Ballad to the bunch;
Or at any rate the surest hand at mixing of the punch;

'Cause why, the members meet for that and other tuneful frolics—
And not to say, like Muffincaps, their Catichiz and Collec's.
But you see them there Itinerants that preach so long and loud,
And always takes advantage like the prigs of any crowd,
Have brought their jangling voices, and as far as they can compass,
Have turn'd a tavern shindy to a seriouser rumpus,
And him as knows most hymns—altho' I can't see how it follers—
They want to be the Chairman of the Glorious Apollers!

Well, that's the row—and who can guess the upshot after all?
Whether Harmony will ever make the "Arms" her House of call,
Or whether this here mobbing—as some longish heads foretel it,
Will grow to such a riot that the Oxford Blues must quell it.
Howsomever, for the present, there's no sign of any peace,
For the hubbub keeps a growing, and defies the New Police;—
But if I was in the Vestry, and a leading sort of Man,
Or a Member of the Vocals, to get backers for my plan,

Why, I'd settle all the squabble in the twinkle of a needle,
For I'd have another candidate—and that's the Parish Beadle,
Who makes such lots of Poetry, himself, or else by proxy,
And no one never has no doubts about his orthodoxy;
Whereby—if folks was wise—instead of either of them Scholars,
And straining their own lungs along of contradictious hollers,
They'll lend their ears to reason, and take my advice as follers,
Namely—Bumble for the Chairman of the Glorious Apollers!

"THE GREAT NAPOLEON OF THE REALMS OF RHYME."

DIABOLICAL SUGGESTIONS.

"I cannot but advise all considering men whose lives are attended with such extraordinary incidents as mine, or even though not so extraordinary, not to slight such secret intimations of Providence, let them come from what invisible intelligence they will. That, I shall not discuss: but certainly they are a proof of the converse of spirits, and a secret communication between those embodied and those unembodied, and such a proof as can never be withstood."

"That such hints and notices are given us I believe few that have made any observations of things can deny: that they are certain discoveries of an invisible world, and a converse of spirits we cannot doubt; and if the tendency of them be to warn us of danger, why should we not suppose they are from some friendly agent (whether supreme, or inferior and subordinate, is not the question), and that they are given for our good?"—ROBINSON CRUSOE.

"And the Devil is still ready at hand with his evil suggestions, to tempt our depraved will to some ill-disposed action."

"He begins first with the phantasie, and moves that so strongly, that no reason is able to resist."—BURTON.

IT has been a favourite notion with enthusiasts and visionaries of various denominations, and in all ages, that we have an intimate intercourse with the invisible world: that we are guided in wholesome or prejudicial courses, and urged to virtuous or sinful actions by the promptings of good and evil spirits. Defoe, from whom I have taken my mottoes, evidently inclined to this belief: his earnest repetition of the argument shows that he personally entertained the sentiments on the subject which he has attributed to his hero. It is true that the

quotations have reference only to benevolent ministerings; but the author does not therefore repudiate an infernal agency. On the contrary, Crusoe readily ascribes to the Devil the mysterious foot-print on the sand, howbeit the impression is of a man's naked sole, instead of the old traditional hoof. In fact, to judge from the writings and preachings of certain sectarians, the satanical interference in human affairs is much more direct and constant than the providential: the Devil in *propria personâ* (for his likeness is as well known as if it had been calotyped by Collen—or daguerreotyped by Beard), having an audible voice and a visible finger in the most humble of their domestic concerns. Moreover, this theory of an infernal intercourse is especially maintained by the weak and the wicked, to whom it affords a convenient plea in mitigation, if not an absolute transfer of their guilt, just as a little boy lays his fault on a bigger and older instigator. Thus when such a sinner breaks some divine commandment, or violates some human law,—if he marries one woman too few, or two women too many—if he mistakes his neighbour's horse for his own ass—or swears to the wrong fact in an affidavit—or sticks his knife in a forbidden sheath,—or absently sets fire to his house instead of light to his fire—what-

ever error the misguided creature may commit, the blame attaches not to him, but to a certain personage, who has appropriately been represented like a sort of black Scape Goat, with horns and a tail. In a word--the poor sinner has been the victim of "a Diabolical Suggestion."

This popular belief received some thirty years ago a striking confirmation in the dreadful murder of an elderly couple, who were killed in bed by their footman. There was no robbery committed, and the motive of the assassin was enveloped in the deepest mystery. The ordinary temptations to such crimes were all absent—there was no injury to revenge, no hatred to gratify, no cupidity to indulge, no delinquency to conceal. According to his own account, and in which the criminal persisted at the gibbet, the deed originated in a sudden and unaccountable inspiration. He had been asleep, and on waking the thought came into his head—he could not tell how—to go and kill his master and mistress. In vain he strove to banish the diabolical suggestion—the horrible idea still haunted him with increasing importunity, till the struggle becoming intolerable and the impulse irresistible—the murder was consummated!

And was there really in this case any positive Satanical prompting—an actual whisper from the

Prince of Darkness? It is impossible for mortal man to reply in the negative: but one may at least show that no such cause was necessary to the effect—that a direct infernal instigation was not indispensable to the bloody consequence. It is quite possible that the first fearful hint was the offspring of a dream,—either a sleeping or waking one—for the opening of the outward organ does not simultaneously close that other eye, which gazes inwardly at another theatre, with its own stage, its own scenery, its own actors, and its own dramas. From the fragments of some visionary tragedy, just abruptly terminated, it was quite possible for the imagination to compound a new plot, incoherently mixed up with the dawning actualities of the house and its inmates. And hence the catastrophe. The mere entrance and entertainment of an unlawful speculation in an ignorant, vicious, and ill-governed mind seems to involve the final working out of the scheme. The more atrocious the proposal, the more vividly it presents itself,—the more horrible its features, the more frequently they recur; as a bad dream is oftener remembered than a good one. The man becomes in reality the slave of his own depraved imagination—its persecutions wear out what remains of his better nature, and submitting at last to its goadings, he performs the abominable task. Thus

the Killing in Thought begets the Killing in Act: for which reason, perhaps, the first Murderer was branded, not in the hand, but on the forehead.

"The wise only," says Coleridge, "possess ideas: the greater part of mankind are possessed by them"—*i. e.* as a person is said to be *possessed* by an evil spirit or demon. A saying so true, that we have only to look round us to discover hundreds of men and women, gentle and simple, in this state of mental thraldom; and, in consequence, daily committing acts so mischievous to themselves or to others, as to seem the plausible results of Diabolical Suggestions. In this category one may perhaps include such malefactors as Oxford and Francis, for whose traitorous attempts there has hitherto appeared no adequate motive. It is not necessary, however, to suppose any treasonable conspiracy—a political purpose, a popular disloyalty, or private enmity. The original sin needs not be of so deep a dye. The empty vapourings of a conceited, shallow-witted potboy, the melodramatic plottings of the son of a stage carpenter, would suffice, on the principle laid down, to induce the criminal result. The frequent repetitions of notorious offences—and in the case of Francis, the servility of the copy—the use of the same kind of weapon and the choice of the identical spot—are

favourable to this hypothesis. An atrocious idea, wantonly entertained in the first instance, is pampered and indulged, till like a spoilt child it tyrannizes over its parent; and vociferously overwhelming the still small voice of conscience and reason—perhaps stiller and smaller than usual in the individual—compels him to submit to the growing imperiousness of its dictates. The mind—the sober, honest, and industrious servant of the wise and good—is the lord and master of the weak and wicked. And this is especially true of the Imagination—lovely and beneficent as the delicate Ariel, under the command of a gifted Prospero—but headstrong, brutish and devilish as Caliban turned out—according to a later history—when the wand that held him in subjection was broken!

A delinquency from this cause—though immeasurably distant in turpitude from the offences just mentioned—was committed, no matter when, nor where, nor by whom; but he was a medical student in our metropolis. Amongst his other destructive or dangerous instruments he possessed a rifle; and along with it a diploma which entitled him to practise, on certain days, with other members of a shooting society at a club-target. At these meetings, the student was a constant attendant and competitor—never dreaming, however, of hitting

any thing but bull's-eyes—till one unlucky day it suddenly came into his head—he could not tell by what orifice—to wonder if he could kill a deer. From that hour the notion haunted him like a ghost—in his bed, at his meals, at his prayers even, or during a walk—which, in fancy, was only a Deer-stalking.

It occurred to him, whilst he listened to his patients—he knew that he could bring down a sick man, but could he kill a fat buck? He could operate fatally, as he was aware, on the human body—but could he do the same by a stag? The tormenting problem interfered with his professional studies—and at the Hospital, while the lecturer was explaining the functions of auricle and ventricle, the disciple was taking aim along an imaginary gun-barrel at an ideal Hart.

At length—the cacöethes, as he called it, became so unbearable, that obeying what Lord E—— and his keeper would certainly have considered a Diabolical Suggestion, the rifleman posted down to C—— Park, and unceremoniously put a ball at 120 paces into the cranium of a monarch of the forest. The creature, as usual in such cases, sprang wildly aloft, and then fell dead, and the mental craving expired along with it. From that moment, the student declared he would not have

given a light farthing to kill another deer, even though he had held his rifle in his hand, and the Earl's permission in his pocket.

It appears, then, that an unpruned imagination, backed by an inveterate memory, may produce evil consequences in the physical world, without any supernatural instigations. But by way of illustration let me adduce two more instances, the first being of a ludicrous character—the second more serious in its tone and tragical in its termination.

Amongst my intimates of ten years ago, there was one named Horace ——, a young man of a speculative turn of mind, and as often happens with such a character, of rather eccentric habits. When I first knew him he was professedly studying for the Bar: but his reading had little to do with the dusty tomes of the law. What he did read might be gathered from his conversation, from which it appeared that his favourite authors were those who put forward the greatest number of ingenious paradoxes, or the most fantastical theories. There was, in fact, a Shandean twist in his mind that inclined him to all kinds of whimsical speculations, and that favourite pastime with such philosophers, the flying of metaphysical kites.

He lived—a bachelor, in a small house in * * * street, with a limited establishment of domestics,

amongst whom he possessed, I verily believe, the plainest maid-servant in all England. Ugliness was out of the question; that has its expression and its interest, which may become even painful or fearful; whereas, the longer you looked at Sally's countenance, the more ordinary it appeared. Lavater himself would have been puzzled to find in it any physiognomical character. It was as plain as a hard dumpling, and as insipid as gruel without sugar or salt. There was not a single line or marking in the whole visage to redeem it from the vacancy of a blank commonplace-book—it was universally flat and barren of meaning—as plain as Salisbury Plain—without a Stonehenge. Her figure was made to match. Her body would have done for a quadruped as well as for a biped, for it had no waist in the middle, and was furnished with limbs so unshapely, that her arms would have served for legs, and her legs for arms. Her feet were peculiar, and the pattern they would have stamped on a soft sand would have deserved a patent for originality. As to the other extremities I am not naturalist enough to know whether there be amongst animals any physical gradation of hands into paws; but if there be, her hands were of that intermediate order, with five fingers apiece which seemed to have degenerated, or rather to have been

aggravated into thumbs, and moreover each member was enveloped in a skin red as beet and of a texture to have rasped away the stoutest towelling. In short, she seemed to have been created expressly for a maid of all-work to some utilitarian—not for show, but use—not very sightly, but very serviceable—like the ancient turnspits.

To her master she was invaluable: being not only sober, honest, and industrious, but frugal, steady, and above all, accustomed to his odd ways and whims, which she had learned to suit during a five years' service.

Judge, then, of my astonishment, when on dining, *tête-à-tête*, with my friend Horace, the "old familiar face," whose plainness had invariably been attendant on the plain dinner, was deficient! Such a domestic phenomenon it was impossible to observe without comment; and when the cloth had been removed I ascertained that Sally had been parted with: but for some mysterious reason which her master did not seem inclined to communicate.

"Had she robbed him?"

"No."

"Or been saucy?"

"No."

"Or taken to drinking?"

"No."

"Become idle or dirty?"

"No."

There was another contingency, though it seemed idle to mention it. "Was she married?"

"Married! my dear fellow did you ever look at her face? Why it was as plain as the plain Staffordshire-ware—the dirty yellow sort without a sprig of pattern!"

And his eyes became fixed, as if he really saw that homely face before him, while he went on talking, or rather thinking aloud.

"Marry *her?* No, no—Nature has forbidden the banns. No man with eyes in his head would have dreamt of it—so thoroughly homely! And then that coarse, clumsy, red, rough, huckaback hand!"

"Yes—it was coarse, red, and clumsy enough. I have often noticed it as she waited at table."

"You have?" said he, rather eagerly. "And did you ever think of kissing it?"

"No—most certainly."

"*I have*," said he; "and what is more, have been within an ace of doing it. Though it must have been——".

And he again relapsed into his abstraction, and looked as if he saw that "red, right hand" before him.

"—Though it must have been like kissing a grater."

I looked steadily at the speaker; but he was perfectly serious, indeed he was little given to jokes practical or verbal.

He was quite in earnest, therefore, about the salute, though what it had to do with poor Sally's dismissal was beyond conjecture. However, by dint of pressing, I extracted the truth. He had discharged her for no fault on her side—it was all owing to a propensity of his own—which he bitterly anathematized, "His confounded habit of speculating and theorizing even on matters of moonshine."

"Poor Sally!" said he, "you know how homely she was. I need not describe her face—you must have looked and wondered at it often and often—for there could not be such another in Nature. For my own part, she attracted me as much, or more than any of your professed beauties. And why not? she was as much a paragon in her own way as Marie Antoinette, or the Duchess of Devonshire. Well, from looking at her, I must needs begin speculating, like a dreaming fool as I am, if she could ever have found an admirer—whether, with all the diversity of human tastes, her form and features could ever have met with liking. Could a face of such vapid homeliness inspire a partiality?

Was it possible, that it could find favour in the eyes even of the most coarse, vulgar, and unrefined of her own species—a Yorkshire ostler or a Paddington bargeman? Was it within probability that she had ever heard the slightest expression of admiration—the remotest approach to a personal compliment?—even from the potboy? Never—never! And then her figure—that strange clumsy shape,—"if shape it could be called that shape had none"—equally devoid of lines of beauty and lines of deformity, a mere bundle of human flesh, could it ever have attracted a ticket-porter or a warehouseman, accustomed to unsymmetrical bags, bales, baggage, and packages of goods in bulk—could her model and proportions have interested even a lighterman, or ballast-heaver, used to the contemplation of the rudest craft, the most ungainly hulks, expressly built for the coarsest drudgery? Never! And as to an offer, as it is called, the mere idea of suing for that red, stumpy, rough hand—but confound her hand! I'll tell you what, my dear fellow, I am convinced that some of our thoughts are neither more nor less than Diabolical Suggestions!"

"It is a rather general opinion."

"I am certain, at least, that only some demon of malice or mischief could have put into my head

to inquire, '*What if I were suddenly to seize and imprint a kiss on that red, scrubby hand?*'

She who probably had never received a salute since her childhood—not even from a tipsy hawbuck in

fair-time—to receive such a love-token from a gentleman? She, who from her teens, had never been addressed with love-nonsense, even by the baker or his journeyman, to receive a tacit declaration of the passion from her own master! The flutter there would be of new-born Vanity—the tumult of awakened Hope! In short, I went on in my own dreamy way, speculating on the revolution in poor Sally's mind, the sudden change that might be wrought in all her old sentiments and feelings by such an extraordinary occurrence. And with any other man the foolish whim would have passed away, harmless, with the hour that gave rise to it; but it is my misfortune to be cursed with a memory which Daguerreotypes every image, and stereotypes every hypothesis, however crude, vague, or idle, that it has once entertained. From that day forward the unlucky girl was associated with that confounded speculation, and the idea of that ridiculous manual experiment came up as regularly as my dinner. There she was, before me, with her plain unloveable face—and if she placed a dish, or changed my plate—there was the red, scrubby hand—suppose I were to kiss it?"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Yes, you may laugh; but you do not know the misery of such a besetting fancy. To be teased for

hours by a haunting tune, or a nonsense verse is bad enough; but to be bored by your own thoughts for days, weeks, and months is intolerable. In fact, by the constant recurrence of the kissing notion, the mere sight of the coarse red hand begot a mechanical impulse that had to be resisted like a temptation. I have felt my lips, as it were, making themselves up for the act—and the wonder is, that I have never done it involuntarily; as, to a certainty, I must some day have done it deliberately to get rid of the torment of the suggestion. There was no alternative, therefore, but to banish the object; and accordingly under the pretence of reducing my establishment, poor Sally, with an excellent character for moral beauty, has been transferred to my sister in the country."

"Yes, and as a provision against any such temptations in future, you have wisely engaged a new maid, as lovely and loveable as Perdita, and as 'neat-handed' as Phillis."

Shortly after this conversation, I went to the Continent, where I remained for some years; and on my return, one of my first visits was to my friend Horace. He was at home, and as usual of a morning, in his little study, whence, after a short conversation, he proposed an adjournment to the drawing-room in the first-floor. Accordingly, still

chattering, he led the way to the foot of the staircase, which I was about to ascend, when suddenly, in the very midst of a sentence, he hastily rushed past me, and ran, or rather flew, up the carpeted steps, three stairs at a time. Eccentric as he had always been, his character had hardly prepared me for this flight, and I hesitated to follow, till his voice came down from the top landing-place, earnestly begging me to excuse his rudeness, and promising an explanation.

This, however, I had already forestalled, and so confidently, that on entering the drawing-room, I seemed to see the figure of an alarmed female, in a morning wrapper and curl-papers, escaping by an opposite door. But there was neither opposite door nor disconcerted lady of the house: the only living figure in the room was Horace himself looking rather flustered and foolish after his recent performance. As soon as he saw me he renewed his apologies, but in spite of the query in my face, the explanation was not forthcoming: he was evidently vexed and mortified, and when I directly applied for the promised elucidation, it was postponed till after our lunch, in the hope, perhaps, that the matter would escape my memory. But I was not to be so defrauded: the remembrance of former odd freaks, and the wild and whimsical

theories in which they had originated, determined me to pluck out the heart of his mystery,—to obtain the solution of his acted riddle. I began, therefore, by congratulating him on his agility, of which he had furnished me with such a singular illustration; but this hint not taking effect, I fairly reminded him, that with all thanks for his hospitable refreshments, he had excited another appetite, which he was bound in honour to pacify, that the cravings of my curiosity remained to be appeased, and to forestal any wilful misapprehension of my meaning, I hummed a few bars of the popular melody—"Sich a gettin' up Stairs!"

"Ah—it may be a joke to *you*," said Horace, looking very serious and frog-like; "but it is death to me! My health, as you know, is none of the strongest, and these violent exercises are not adapted to improve it!"

"Then why indulge in them? There can be no necessity for a gentleman's running up his own staircase as you did—unless, like the Poor Gentleman in the comedy, he mistakes his friend for a bailiff."

"No!—My dear fellow, you are quite mistaken—but that is your happiness. You have not my cursed speculative imagination—nor my tenacious, inveterate memory—and you will never die a martyr, as I shall, to a Diabolical Suggestion."

"A what?"

"A prompting from the Devil."

"Why—I hope not. I am no methodist, to have the Old Gentleman at my ear and my elbow. But I beg pardon—you have perhaps joined the sect—or may be the Swedenborgians, who believe in an intercourse with good and evil spirits"

"Neither. It is not necessary to be a follower of the Count or of Whitfield, to be subject to such infernal influence. You remember the study I had engaged in just before you went abroad?"

"Yes—of the German language. And you were learning it with your accustomed gluttony, as if you wanted to get from the tip to the root of the tongue in a single week."

"Ah, I had better have taken to the Chinese! My mastery of the Teutonic language was the source of my misfortune. You are familiar, of course, with the German Romances?"

"Only in the translations."

"You know, then, the prominent part which is played by the Devil in their most popular stories. More prominent even than in Paradise Lost, where Satan figures, not in the ascendant, but as the rebellious antagonist of a still mightier Power, and the divine scheme of Human Redemption moves parallel with the diabolical plot for Human Perdition. In the German Romances, on the con-

trary, the Fiend possesses the earth, and reigns as absolutely as any Lord Paramount of the feudal ages. Nay, his sway extends beyond this world to the world to come, and he has power over life and death, not only the temporary, but the eternal. The legitimate Governor of the Universe has been deposed, and there is a frightful interregnum—Anarchy succeeds to Order—and the blind random decrees of Chance supersede the ordinances of a sciential Providence. Immortal souls are lost by the turn of a die or a card, or saved by some practical subterfuge or verbal evasion. Fraud and Violence alone are triumphant. Justice is blind and Mercy is deaf—the innocent bosom receives the bullet that was moulded with unholy rites; and the maiden, whose studies never extended beyond her prayer-book, is involved in the fate of the ambitious student who bartered his salvation for interdicted knowledge. "In short, you seem to recognise that dreary fiction of the atheist—a World without a God. Such is the German Diablerie!"

"You are too severe."

"Not at all. Look even at the Faust. Youth and Innocence personified in poor Margaret—have no chance. She has no fair field; and assuredly no favour. The fight is too unequal. She has to contend single-handed against Man and Mephisto-

philes, the witchcraft of human love and the sorcery of Satanic hatred. The Prince of Hell in person acts supernaturally against her—but Heaven is passive, and works no miracle in her behalf. There is no help on earth—no pity in the skies—the guardian spirits and ministers of grace supposed to hover round, and to succour oppressed innocence, keep far aloof—the weak is abandoned to the strong—and the too tender and trusting nature is burdened, through a sheer diabolical juggle, with the unnatural murder of a Mother. The trial is beyond Humanity. The seductions of Faust are backed by the artifices of the subtle Spirit that overcame Eve; and Margaret falls as she needs must under such fearful odds—and seemingly unwatched by that providential eye which marks the fall of a sparrow. There is indeed the final chorus from Heaven, that 'She is saved!' but was any mind ever satisfied—were *you* ever satisfied with that tardy exhibition of the Divine Justice—just as Poetical Justice is propitiated at the end of some wretched melo-dramatic novel, wherein at the twelfth hour the long-persecuted heroine is unexpectedly promoted to a state of happiness ever after?"

"Well—there is some show of truth and reason in your criticism—but, *revenir à nos moutons*—what

has either Faust or the Frëyschutz to do with your scampering up stairs?"

"Every thing. After learning German, my first use of the acquisition was to go through all their Romances, and consequently a regular course of Diablerie—from the Arch Demon, who inhabited Pandemonium, to the Imp that lived in a bottle—from the scholar who bartered his soul, to the fellow who sold his own shadow. The consequence I might have foreseen. My head became stuffed with men in black and black dogs—with unholy compacts, and games of chance. I dreamt of Walpurgis Revels and the Wolf's Glen—Zamiel glared on me with his fiery eyes by night; and the smooth voice of Mephistophiles kept whispering in my ear by day. Wherever my thoughts wandered, there was the foul Fiend straddling across their path, like Bunyan's Apollyon,—ready to play with me for my immortal soul at cards or dice—to strike infernal bargains, and to execute unholy contracts to be signed with blood and sealed with sulphur. In a word, I was completely be-Devilled."

"But the stairs—the running up stairs?"

"The result of my too intimate acquaintance with so much folly and profanity—a kind of bet. S'death! I'm ashamed to mention it!—a sort of wager that came into my head one day—a diabo-

lical suggestion of course—that the Fiend might have me body and soul, in default of my reaching the top of the stairs before counting a certain number!"

"What! a wager with the Devil!"

"Yes—the infernal suggestion—for it *was* an infernal suggestion—was whispered to me at the stair-foot; and as if my salvation had really depended on the issue, I was up the whole flight in an instant. The next moment sufficed to convince me of the absurdity, not to say sinfulness, of the act; but what defence is our deliberate reason against such sudden impulses? Before reflection could come into play, the thing was done and over. Nor was that the end. You remember my irresistible prompting to kiss the red, rugged hand of poor Sally?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, there was the same mental process. You know how much our ideas are the slaves of association—and especially they are so in a tenacious mind like mine, in which the most trivial fancies obtain a permanent record. To find myself near any stairs was enough therefore to revive the diabolical hint—the mere sight of a banister set me off—in fact, before the month was out I had raced again, again, and again, not only up my own

flight, but up those of half my friends and acquaintances."

It was impossible to help laughing at this description. The picture of a gentleman scampering up people's stairs, with the agility of a lamplighter, was, as I said in my apology, so very comical.

"Humph! Not if you knock down your own servant with the tray, or frighten an old rich aunt into hysterics—both of which I have performed within the last week."

"But you might perhaps break yourself—"

"Never! it's impossible! As I said before, the mere sight of the banisters is enough. Besides, from practice, the thing has become a habit, and the mental prompting is backed by a bodily impulse. No;" and he shook his head very gravely, "I shall never leave it off—except by death. And with my state of health, to run full speed up a long flight,—there are six-and-twenty stairs, and two sharp turns—under penalty of eternal perdition, before one could count a score—"

"Why, surely you do not believe in the validity of such a wager!"

"Heaven alone knows," replied Horace, very solemnly, who, if he had not been made positively superstitious by his German reading, and his familiarity with the supernatural, had at least learned

to regard the abstract evil principle as a real and active personage. "I have tried over and over again to argue myself into your opinion. But all my reasoning and casuistry are of no avail against a sort of vague misgiving; and, as the forfeit is too awful to be risked on a doubt, I always take care, as far as in me lies, to secure the stake by winning the wager—that is to say, by getting to the top before I can count twenty."

"You might secure it by slow counting."

"As if that would retard *his!* No, my dear fellow, there is no cheating *him!* To tell the truth, I shudder at times to think what may happen to me—a fall—a sprain—the encounter of other people on the stairs—a loose rod—the cat or dog—which, by the bye, shall be sent away——"

I looked again, full in Horace's face; but he was as grave as a Judge, and evidently in sad, sober earnest: as indeed appeared the next minute, when he went off into one of his fits of abstraction, but continued to talk to himself. From what he muttered it was plain that he was in the predicament of the people described by Coleridge as "possessed" by their own ideas. Some of his expressions even impressed me with a doubt of his perfect sanity—whether he was not under the influence of a kind of monomania. However, I tried to laugh and

reason him out of his "wager," but the attempt was futile, and I took my leave.

"God bless you, my dear fellow!" and the tears filled his eyes as he energetically squeezed my hand, "it is the last time you will see me—mark my words. However it may affect me *hereafter*, that Diabolical Suggestion has done for me *here*—and will hurry me to my grave!"

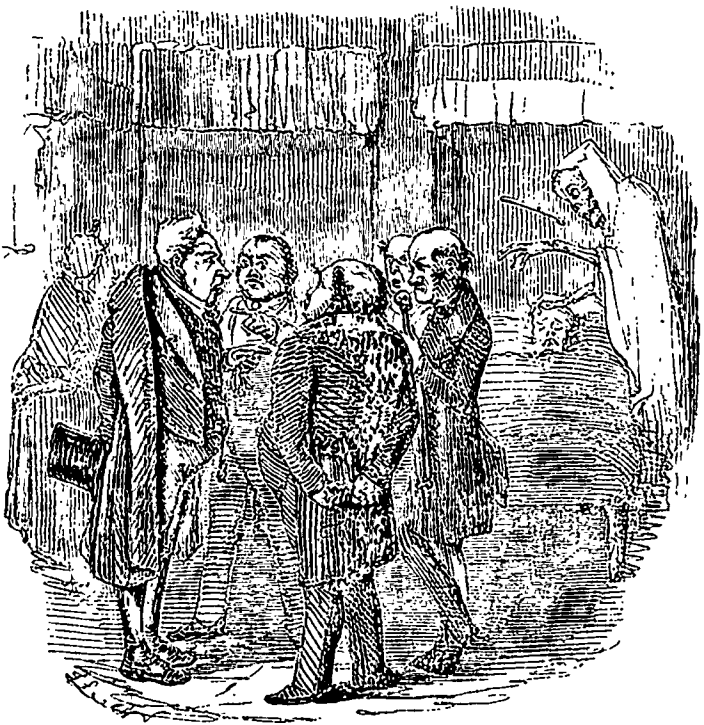
Poor Horace! His prediction was too true. On calling upon him a month afterwards, I found that he had let and removed from his old residence: but one of his servants had remained with the new tenants, and was able to give me some particulars of her ex-master. His health had suddenly broken—his complaint declaring itself to be a decided organic affection of the heart, and he had suffered from violent palpitations and spasms in the chest. The doctors had ordered change of air and scene—and about a fortnight before he had gone into the country. somewhere in Sussex, where he was living in a cottage, that, as she significantly added, was "all on one floor." But alas! she was incorrect in her statement. He was *living* nowhere; for that very morning he had gone to call on the clergyman of the parish, and after a flight—which made the footman believe that he had admitted a madman, dropped dead on the last top step of the drawing-room stairs!

A HARD CASE.

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"
'Tis with their judgments as their watches, none
Go just alike, but each believes his own.—POPE.

THAT Doctors differ, has become a common proverb; and truly, considering the peculiar disadvantages under which they labour, their variances are less wonders than matters of course. If any man works in the dark, like a mole, it is the Physician. He has continually, as it were, to divine the colour of a pig in a poke—or a cat in the bag. He is called in to a suspected *trunk* without the policeman's privilege of a search. He is expected to pass judgment on a physical tragedy going on in the house of life, without the critic's free admission to the performance. He is tasked to set to rights a disordered economy, without, as the Scotch say, going "*ben*," and must guess at riddles hard as Sampson's as to an animal with a honeycombed inside. In fact, every malady is an Enigma, and when the doctor gives you over, he "gives it up."

A few weeks ago one of these puzzles, and a very intricate one, was proposed to the faculty at a metropolitan hospital. The disorder was desperate: the patient writhed and groaned in agony—but his *lights* as usual threw none on the subject. In the meantime the case made a noise, and medical men of all degrees and descriptions, magnetizers,



homoiopathists, hydropathists, mad doctors, sane doctors, quack doctors, and even horse doctors, flocked to the ward, inspected the symptoms, and then debated and disputed on the nature of the disease. It was in the brain, the heart, the liver, the nerves, the muscles, the skin, the blood, the kidneys, the "globes of the lungs," "the momentum," "the pancras," "the capilaire vessels," and the "gutty sereny." Then for its nature: it was chronic, and acute, and intermittent, and non-contagious, and "ketching," and "inflammable," and "heredittary," and "eclectic," and Lord knows what besides. However, the discussion ended in a complete wrangle, and every doctor being mounted on his own theory, never was there such a scene since the Grand Combat of Hobby Horses at the end of Mr. Bayes's Rehearsal!

"*It's in his* STOMACH!" finally shouted the House-Surgeon,—after the departing disputants,—"*it's in his stomach!*"

The poor patient, who in the interval had been listening between his groans, no sooner heard this decision, than his head seemed twitched by a spasm, that also produced a violent wink of the left eye. At the same time he beckoned to the surgeon.

"You're all right, doctor—as right as a trivet."

"I know I am," said the surgeon,—"it's in your stomach."

"It *is* in my stomach, sure enough."

"Yes—flying gout"—

"Flying what!" exclaimed the patient. "No, no sich luck, Doctor," and he made a sign for the surgeon to put his ear near his lips, "it's six *Hogs* and a *Bull*, as I've swaller'd."

ON THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY,

TAKEN BY THE DAGUERREOTYPE.

YES, there are her features! her brow, and her hair,
And her eyes, with a look so seraphic,
Her nose, and her mouth, with the smile that is there,
Truly caught by the Art Photographic!

Yet why should she borrow such aid of the skies,
When by many a bosom's confession,
Her own lovely face, and the light of her eyes,
Are sufficient to *make an impression?*

THE LEE SHORE.

Sleet! and Hail! and Thunder!
And ye Winds that rave,
Till the sands thereunder
Tinge the sullen wave—

Winds, that like a Demon,
Howl with horrid note
Round the toiling Seaman,
In his tossing boat—

From his humble dwelling,
On the shingly shore,
Where the billows swelling,
Keep such hollow roar—

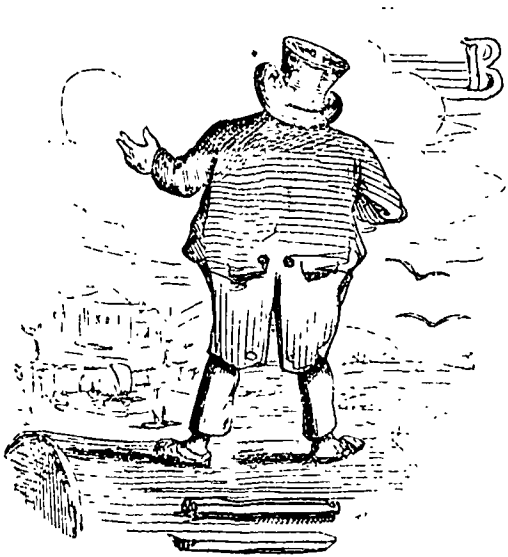
From that weeping Woman,
Seeking with her cries,
Succour superhuman
From the frowning skies—

From the Urchin pining
For his Father's knee—
From the lattice shining,
Drive him out to sea!

Let broad leagues dissever
Him from yonder foam—
Oh, God! to think Man ever
Comes too near his Home!

ENGLISH RETROGRESSION.

"Up one-pair backwards."



ACK her!" shouted the Captain, from the paddle-box of the Lively to the cabin-boy on the deck, who repeated the command to the engineer in the hold—and the paddles being reversed to order, the packet, with a retrograde motion, began to approach the pier, to which she was soon secured by a hawser. Her passage across the Channel had been a rough one: but as all passages come to an end at last, she had arrived in a French harbour and smooth water.

There is this advantage in a stormy voyage by sea, that it makes one land on a foreign soil as cordially as if it were native; and accordingly with the most perfect satisfaction I found myself standing, high and dry, in that seaport, the name of which Queen Mary of England, surnamed the Bloody, declared would be found engraven on her heart—the earliest instance, by the by, of lithography. For my own part, my heart was also deeply interested in the locality, which, to an Englishman is classical ground, and associated with literary fictions as well as historical facts. Not to name a certain slender figure of a Traveller in black, with a clerical wig and hat, my mind's eye was filled with the familiar phantoms of personages almost as real to me as the place itself; and the very scenery in which they had played their parts, was shortly to be before me. With the help of a Calais touter, I had found my way to the wrong Hotel, the master of which stood bowing to me, as only a Frenchman can bow, and congratulating me—or rather all France—if not all Europe—on my safe arrival. In compliment to my nation, he pretended to use our native language, but of course it was a strange jargon—for it seems to be the pleasure of "our Sweet Enemy France"—as Sir Philip Sidney called her—since she cannot break our ranks, or

our banks, or our hearts, heads, winds, or spirits, to break our English. But my head and heart were too full of Monsieur Dessein, the Mendicant Monk, the Désobligeant, the Remise, the Fair Fleming, and the Snuff-Box to notice or resent the liberties that were taken with our insular tongue.

"And now, Monsieur," said I, after bandying civilities which employed us to the top of the first flight of stairs—"and now, Monsieur, be pleased to show me the chamber which was occupied by the Author of the 'Sentimental Journey.'"

"La journée?"

"Yes, the apartment of our Tristam Shandy."

"L'apartement—triste—"

"Exactly: the room where he had that memorable interview with the Monk of the Franciscan order."

"Order?—ah!—ouï—yes—you shall order, sare, what you will please—"

"All in good time, Monsieur,—but I must first see the room that was tenanted by our immortal Sterne."

"Sterne!" ejaculated my host—"eh?—Sterne?—Diable l'emporte!—it is de oder Hotel. Mon Dieu! c'est une drole de chose—but de English pepels when dey come to Calais, dey always come *Sterne foremost!*"

THE CAMBERWELL BEAUTY.

A CITY ROMANCE.

She entered his shop, which was very neat and spacious, and he received her with all the marks of the most profound respect, entreating her to sit down, and showing her with his hand the most honourable place.—ARABIAN NIGHTS.

CHAPTER I.

MR. BOOBY was in his shop, his back to the fire and his face to the *Times*, when happening to look above the upper edge of the newspaper, towards the street, he caught sight of an equipage that seemed familiar to him.

Could it be!

Yes, it was the same dark brown chariot, with the drab liveries,—the same gray horses, with the same crest on the harness, and above all the same lady-face was looking through the carriage-window!

In a moment Mr. Booby was at his glass-door, obsequiously ushering the fair customer into his shop, where with his profoundest bow and his

sunniest smile he invited her to a seat at the counter. Her commands were eagerly solicited and promptly executed. The two small volumes she asked for were speedily produced, neatly packed up, and delivered to the footman in drab, to be deposited in the dark-brown chariot. But the lady still lingered. Thrice within a fortnight she had occupied the same seat, on each occasion making a longer visit than the last, and becoming more and more friendly and familiar. Perhaps, being past the prime of life, she was flattered by the extremely deferential attentions of the young tradesman; perhaps she was pleased with the knowledge he possessed, or seemed to possess, of a particular subject, and was gratified by the interest which he took, or appeared to take, in her favourite science. However, she still lingered, smiling very pleasantly, and chatting very agreeably in her low, sweet voice, while she turned over the pretty illustrated volumes that were successively offered to her notice.

In the mean time the delighted Booby did his utmost in the conversational way to maintain his ground, which was no easy task, seeing that he was not well read in her favourite science, nor indeed in any other. In fact, he did not read at all; and although a butcher gets beefish, a bookseller does

not become bookish, from the mere smell of his commodity. Nevertheless he managed to get on, in his own mind, very tolerably, adding a few words about Egypt and the Pyramids to the lady's mention of the Sphinx, and at the name of Memnon, edging in a sentence or two about the British Museum. Sometimes, indeed, she alluded to classical proper names altogether beyond his acquaintance; but in such cases, he escaped by flying off at a tangent to the new ballet, or the last new novel, of which he had derived an opinion from the advertisements—nay, even digressing at need, like Sir Peter Laurie, on the Omnibus nuisance, and the Wooden Pavements. To tell the truth, the lady, as sometimes happens, was so intent on her own share of the discourse, that she paid little attention to his topics or their treatment, and so far from noticing any incongruity would have allowed him to talk unheeded of the dullness of the publishing trade, and the tightness of money in the City. Thanks to this circumstance he lost nothing in her opinion, whilst his silent homage and assiduities recommended him so much to her good graces, that at parting he received an especial token of her favour.

"Mr. Booby," said the lady, and she drew an embossed card from an elegant silver case, and pre-

sented it to the young publisher, "you must come and see me."

Mr. Booby was of course highly delighted and deeply honoured; not merely verbally, but actually and physically; for as he took the embossed card, his blood thrilled with delight to the very tips of his fingers. Not that he was in love with the donor; though still handsome, she was past the middle-age, and, indeed, old enough, according to the popular phrase, to have been his mother. But then she was so ladylike and well-bred, and had such a carriage —the dark brown one—and so affable—with a footman and a gold-headed cane—quite a first-rate connexion—with a silver crest on the harness—and oh! such a capital pair of well-matched grays! These considerations were all very gratifying to his ambition; but above all, his vanity was flattered by a condescension which confirmed him in an opinion he had long indulged in secret—namely, that in personal appearance, manners, and fashion, he was a compound of the Apollo Belvidere and Lord Chesterfield, with a touch of Count D'Orsay. But the lady speaks.

"Any morning, Mr. Booby, except Wednesday and Friday. I shall be at home all the rest of the week, and shall leave orders for your admittance."

Mr. Booby bowed, as far as he could, after the fashion of George IV.—escorted the lady into the street, as nearly as possible in the style of the Master of the Ceremonies at Brighton, and then handed her into her carriage with the air, as well as he could imitate it, of a French Marquis of the *ancien régime.*

"I shall expect you, Mr. Booby," said the lady, through the carriage-window. "And as an inducement"—here she smiled mysteriously, and nodded significantly—"you shall have a peep at my Camberwell Beauty."

CHAPTER II.

"And did he go?"

Why, as to his figure, it had been three times cut out, at full length, in black paper—once on the Chain Pier at Brighton—once in Regent-street, and once—

"But did he go?"

Then, for his face, he had twice had it done in oil, thrice in crayons, and once in pencil by Wageman. Moreover, he had had it minatured by Lover—and he had been in treaty with Behnes for his bust, but the marbling came so expensive—

"But did he go, I say?"

So expensive that he gave up the design, and contented himself with a mask in plaster of Paris.

"But did he go?"

Yes—to both. To Collen for a half-length, and to Beard for a whole one. I think that was all—but no—he went to What's-his-name, the modeller, and had a cast taken of his leg.

"Hang his leg! Did he go or not?"

To be sure he was a tradesman; but his line was a genteel one; and his shop was double-fronted, in a first-rate thoroughfare, and lighted with gas. Then as to his business, with strict assiduity and attention, and a little more punctuality and despatch—

"Confound his business!—Did—he—go?"

To the Opera? Yes, often. And had his clothes made at the West End—and gave champagne—and backed a horse or two for the Darby—and smoked cigars—and was altogether, for a tradesman, very much of a gentleman.

"But, for the last time, did he go?"

Where?

"Why to see the Beauty!"

He did.

"What to Camberwell?"

No; but to the looking-glass, over the mantel-shelf in his own dining-room, and where, Narcissus

like, he gazed at his reflected image till he actually persuaded himself that he was as unique as the Valdarfer Boccaccio, and as elegantly got up as Lockhart's Spanish Ballads.

CHAPTER III.

The dark brown chariot was gone.

As it rattled away, and just as the drab back of the footman disappeared, Mr. Booby turned his attention to the embossed card, and deliberately read the address thrice over.

"*Mrs. E. G. Heathcote, Grove Terrace, Camberwell.*"

To what wild dreams, to what extravagant speculations did it give birth! He had evidently made a favourable impression on the mature lady, and might not his merits do him as good service with her daughter, or niece, or ward, or whatever she was, the young lovely creature to whom she had alluded by so charming a title. The Camberwell Beauty! The acknowledged Venus of that large and populous parish! The Beauty of all the Grove, and Grove Lane—of the Old road and the New—of all the Green—of Church-row and the Terrace, of all Champion and Denmark Hills—of all Cold Harbour Lane! The loveliest of the lovely, from the Red Cap on the north to the

Greyhound on the south—from the Holland Arms in the east to the Blue Anchor in the west!

"Here, Perry, reach me the Book of Beauty."

The shopman handed the volume to his master, who began earnestly to look through the illustrations, wondering which of those bewitching countesses, or mistresses, or misses, the fair *incognita* might resemble. But such speculations were futile, so the book was closed and thrown aside; and then his thoughts reverting to his own personal pretensions, he passed his fingers through his hair, adjusted his collar, and drawing himself up to his full height, took a long look at his legs. But this survey was partial and unsatisfactory, and accordingly striding up the stairs, three at once, he appealed to the looking-glass in the dining-room, as stated in the preceding chapter.

The verdict of the mirror has been told, and the result was a conviction in the mind of Mr. Booby, that sometime, and somewhere, the Beauty must have been smitten with his elegant appearance—perhaps in an open carriage at Epsom—perhaps in the street—but most probably as he was standing up, the observed of all observers, in the pit of Her Majesty's Theatre.

For the rest of the day Mr. Booby retired from business; indeed, he was in a state of exaltation

that unfitted him for mercantile affairs, or any of the commonplace operations of life. The cloth was laid, and the dinner was served up, but he could not eat; and as usual in such cases, he laid the blame on the cook and the butcher. The soles were smoked, the melted butter was oiled, the potatoes were over-boiled, the steak was fresh killed, the tart was execrable, and the cheese had been kept too dry. In short he relished nothing except the bumper of sherry, which he filled and drank off, dedicating it mentally to the Camberwell Beauty.

The second glass was poured out and quaffed to his own honour, and the third was allotted to an extempore sentiment, which rolled the two former toasts into one. These ceremonies performed, he again consulted the mirror over the mantelshelf, carefully pocket-combing his hair, and plucking up his collar as before. But these were mere commonplace manœuvres compared with those in which he afterwards indulged.

Now of all absurd animals, a man in love is the most ridiculous, and of course doubly so if he should be in love with two at once, himself and a lady. This being precisely the case with Mr. Booby, he gave a loose to his two-fold passion, and committed follies enough for a brace of love-

lunatics. It would have cured a quinsey to have seen and heard how he strutted, and chuckled, and smiled, and talked to himself—how he practised bowing, and sliding, and kneeling, and sighing —how he threw himself into attitudes and ecstacies, and then how he twisted and wriggled to look at his calves, and as far as he could all round his waist, and up his back! Never, never was there a man in such a fever of vanity and love-delirium, since the conceited Steward, who walked in yellow-stockings and cross-gartered, and dreamt that he was a fitting mate for the Beauty of Illyria!

CHAPTER IV.

All lovers are dreamers—

"In real earnest!"

Perfectly, miss. They are notorious visionaries, whether asleep or awake.

"Why, then, of all things, let us have the dream of Mr. Booby about the Camberwell Beauty. It must have been such a very curious one, considering that he had never seen the lady!"

It was, and, remembering his business, rather characteristic to boot. I have hinted before, how vainly he had tried, during the day, to paint an ideal portrait of the Fair Unknown, and no sooner

were his eyes closed at night, than a similar series of vague figures and faces began to tantalize him in his sleep. Dim feminine shapes, of every style of beauty, flitted before him, and vanished like Daguerreotype images, which there was not light enough to fix. Before he could examine, or choose, and say "this must be the Idol," the transitory phantom was gone, or transfigured. The blonde ripened into a brunette, the brunette bleached into a blonde before he could decide on either complexion. Flaxen tresses darkened into jet—raven locks brightened into golden ringlets, and yellow curls into auburn, before he could prefer one colour to another. Black eyes changed at a wink into gray; blue in a twinkling to hazel,—but no, they were green! The commanding figure dwindled into a sylph, the fairy swelled into the fine woman, the majestic Juno melted into a Venus, the rosy Hebe became a pale Minerva—who in turn looked for a moment like the lady in the frontispiece to the "Book of Beauty;" and then, one after another, like all the Beauties at Hampton Court!

Alas! amid such a bewildering galaxy, how could he fix on the Beauty of Camberwell!

One angelic figure, which retained its shape and features somewhat longer than the rest, informed

him, by the mysterious correspondence of dreams, that she was the Beauty of Buttermere. Another lovely phantom, who presented herself rather vividly, by signs understood only in visions, let him know that she was the Beauty who had espoused the gentle Beast. And, finally, a whole bevy of Nymphs and Graces suddenly appeared at once, but as suddenly changed—

"Into what—pray what?"

Why, into a row of books, and which signified to him by their lettered backs that they were "the Beauties of England and Wales!"

CHAPTER V.

Thursday morning!—

It was the first day on which Mrs. E. G. Heathcote, of Grove Terrace, Camberwell, was to be "at home;" and the eager Mr. Booby had resolved to avail himself of the very earliest opportunity for a visit. A determination not formed so much on his own account, as for the sake of the enamoured love-sick creature, whom his vanity painted as sitting on pins, needles, thorns, tenter-hooks, and all the other picked pointed articles which are popularly supposed to stuff the seats, cushions, pillows, and bolsters of the chairs,

beds, sofas, and settees, of anxious and impatient people.

Accordingly, no sooner was breakfast over, than snatching up his hat, he set out—

"Ah, to Gracious Street for the homnibus!"

No ma'am—to the Poultry for a pair of exquisitely-made French gloves, that fitted better than his skin, and were of the most delicate lemon-colour that you ever, or never, saw. Thence he went to Cheapside, where he treated himself to a superfine thirty-shilling beaver, of a fashionable shape, that admirably suited the character of his physiognomy; after which he bought, I forget where, a bottle of genuine Eau de Cologne—the sort that is manufactured by Jean Marie Farina, and by nobody else—and finally, looking in at a certain noted shop near the Mansion-house, he purchased a bouquet of the choicest and rarest flowers of the season.

"Well, and then he went to the bus."

No—he returned home to dress—namely, in his best blue coat with the brass buttons, a fancy waistcoat, black trousers, and patent leather boots. His shirt was frilled—with an ample allowance of white cuff—and his silken cravat was of a pale sky-blue. Of course, he did not fail to consult the looking-glass in the dining-room, which assured

him that his costume was complete. The shopmen, however, to whom he afterwards submitted the question, were more inclined to demur. The clerk thought that an Union pin would have been an improvement to the cravat, and the porter would have preferred a few Mosaic studs in the shirt-front. In answer to which, the master, who had consulted them, declared that they knew nothing about the matter.

In the mean time the hour struck which he had appointed in his own mind for the start, so hastily striding up Cornhill and turning into Grace-church-street, he luckily obtained the last vacant place in an omnibus, which was already on the move. As usual, the number of the passengers was considerably reduced ere the vehicle reached the Red Cap, at the Green—in fact, there remained but three gentlemen besides Mr. Booby, who after some preliminary conversation, contrived to turn the discourse on the subject that lay nearest his heart. But he took nothing by his motion. A little cross-looking old fellow, in the corner-seat, looked knowing but said nothing: the other two passengers declared that they had never heard of the Camberwell Beauty.

"I am going to see her, however," said Mr. Booby.

"Are you, sir?" retorted the little crabbed-looking old gentleman in the corner-seat. "Well, I hope you may get her!"

"I hope, in fact I have reason to believe, that I shall," replied the self-confident Mr. Booby; and twitching the Mackintosh of the conductor, he desired to be set down at the bottom of the Grove.

"It is rather strange," he thought, as he walked slowly up the hill, "that they have not heard of her. The little old chap in the corner though, seemed to know her, and to be rather jealous of me. But, no—it's impossible that he can be a rival;" and as he said this, there occurred a corresponding alteration in his gait—"perhaps he's her father or her uncle."

CHAPTER VI.

Bravo, Vanity!

Of all friends in need, seconds, backers, confidents, helpers, and comforters, there is none like Self-Conceit! Of all the Life Assurances in England, from the Mutual to the Equitable, there is none like Self-Assurance! It defies the cold water of timidity and the wet blankets of diffidence

—and against the aguish, chilly, and hot fits of modesty it is as sovereign as Quinine!

How many men, for instance, on a similar errand to that of the young bookseller, would have felt nerve-quakes and *tremor cordis*, and have scarcely mustered courage enough to pull the bell at the gate! How many would have remained in the front garden shilly-shallying like Master Slender, till the Camberwell Beauty herself came forth, as sweet Anne Page did, to entreat her bashful wooer to enter the premises!

Not so with Mr. Booby; as soon as he had ascertained the right house, he walked resolutely up to the door, and played on the knocker something very analogous to a flourish of trumpets. The well-known footman in the drab livery appeared to the summons and admitted the visiter, who contrived during his progress through the hall to smooth his coat-tails, pluck up his collar, pull down his white cuffs, and pass his pocket-comb through his hair. He was going, moreover, to hang up his hat; but luckily remembered the present mode, and that the beaver was bran new, wherefore he carried it with him into the drawing-room—a very indifferent fashion, be it said, and particularly in the case of an invitation to dinner, for what can be more ridiculous than to see a guest

sitting hat in hand, as if he had dropped in unasked, and was far from certain of a welcome.

"And did he see the Beauty?"

No, madam. Mrs. Heathcote was alone: but obviously prepared for the visit. A number of handsomely bound books almost covered the round table, some of them open, and exhibiting coloured plates illustrative of Conchology, Geology, and Botany; others were devoted to Ornithology and Entomology—hinting, by the way, that the lady was rather multifarious in her studies.

In manner she was as condescending, affable, and agreeable as ever, and as chatty as usual, in

her low, sweet voice. Nevertheless, her visiter did not feel quite so much at his ease as he had anticipated. After the first compliments, and commonplace remarks on the weather, the lady's conversation became perplexingly scientific, her allusions distressingly obscure, while technical terms, and classical proper names, fell in quick succession from her lips. Some of the names seemed familiar to the ear of the listener, but before he could determine whether he had heard them at school, or in his business, or at the opera, he was obliged to "give them up," and direct his guesses to a fresh set of riddles. Every moment he was getting more mystified;—he knew no more than a dog whether she was talking mythology, or metaphysics, or natural history, or algebra, or alchemy, or astrology, or all six of them at once.

This ignorance was sufficiently irksome; but it soon became alarming, for she began to make more direct appeals to him, and occasionally seemed surprised and dissatisfied with his answers. His old shifts, besides, were no longer of any avail —she turned a deaf ear to his quotations from the *Times* and *Herald*—the theatrical movements, the odds at Tattersall's, and the progress of the New Royal Exchange. Above all, he trembled to find that the extraordinary mental efforts he was com-

pelled to make in order to keep pace with her, were fast driving out of his head all the pretty speeches which he had prepared for a more interesting conference. In a word, he was thoroughly flabbergasted—as completely topsyturvied in his ideas as the fly that walks on the ceiling, with its head downwards. What course to take he knew no more than that vainly enlightened man, the man in the moon. He fidgeted in his seat, coughed, sighed, blew his nose, sniffed at the bouquet, looked "all round his hat," then into it, and then on the crown of it, but without making any discovery. The lady meanwhile talking on, in a full stream, for all he knew, like Coleridge on the Samo-Thracian Mysteries!

"Well, well, never mind her nonsense."

Poor Booby! His conceit was fast being taken out of him. His vanity was oozing out at every pore of his body—his assurance seemed peeling off his face, like the skin after a fever. He was dying to see the Beauty—but alas! there was that eternal tongue, inexhaustible as an Artesian spring, still pouring, pouring,—by the way, ma'am, did you ever read the "Arabian Nights?"

"Of course, sir."

Well, then, you will remember the story of the tailor who, burning, broiling, and frying to see his

beauty of Bagdad by appointment, was detained, half-shaved, hour after hour, by Es-Sámit, the garrulous barber. Now, call the tailor Mr. Booby, and put the babbling tonsor into petticoats, and you will have an exact notion of the case—how the lady gossipped, and how the perplexed lover fretted and fumed, till, like the oriental, he felt "as if his gall-bladder had burst," and was ready to cry out with him, "For the sake of heaven be silent, for thou hast crumbled my liver!"

"Dear me, how shocking!"

Very! In spite of the rudeness of the act he could not refrain from looking at his watch—an hour had passed, and yet there had been no more mention of the Beauty than if she had been doomed, like the Sleeping one, to lie dormant for a hundred years. The most distressing doubts and misgivings began to creep over him. For example, that the talkative lady was not precisely of sound mind—she was certainly rather flighty and rambling in her discourse—and consequently that the lovely being she had promised to introduce to him might be altogether a fiction! His spirits sank at the idea, like the quicksilver before a hurricane, and he heartily wished himself back in his own shop, or his warehouse,—anywhere but alone in the same room with a crazy woman, who talked Encyclopedias, till he was as heavy at heart,

as confused in his head, and as uneasy all over as if he had just feasted with a geogolist on pudding-stone and conglomerate.

Never had he been so mystified and confounded in all his life! Accustomed to revolve in the circle of his own perfections, his thoughts were utterly at fault when called to the consideration of circumstances and combinations at all complex or extraordinary; whilst his superficial knowledge, limited to the covers of books, failed to furnish him with any hint towards the unravelment of a mystery quite equal, in his estimation, to the intricacies of a romance. What would he not have given for a few minutes' private consultation with his C°., with his Clerk, or even with his Porter!

A dozen times he was on the point of rising, determined to plead a sudden headach, a bleeding at the nose, or a forgotten engagement; and certainly ere long he would have said or done something desperate if the eccentric lady had not, of her own accord, put a period to his suspense by saying abruptly,

"But we have gossipped enough, Mr. Booby, and I must now introduce you to my Camberwell Beauty."

The crisis was come! The important interview was at hand! Mr. Booby sprang to his feet, twitched his collar, plucked his cuffs, set

up his hair, clapped his bran new hat under his left arm, and smelling and smiling at his bouquet, walked jauntily on his tiptoes, at the invitation of the lady, into a sort of boudoir.

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CHAPTER VII.

"And was the Beauty in the little room?"

Yes. There was also a couch in it, and a most luxurious library chair. One side of the wall was covered with cases of stuffed birds of the smaller species, the opposite side was occupied by cases of shells, and specimens of minerals, and metallic ores, and the third side was taken up with cases of beetles, moths and butterflies.

"But the Beauty?"

On the sofa-table lay a Hortus Siccus for botanical specimens, and a Scrap-book,—both open.

"But the Beauty?"

In one corner of the room, on a kind of a pedestal, was a bust of Cuvier; in the opposite corner, on a similar stand, a head of Werner; in the third nook was that of Rossini: and in the fourth stood a handsome perch for a parrot, but the bird was dead or absent. Over the door—"

"No, no—the Beauty?"

Over the door was a half-length of the lady herself, in a fancy dress; and from the centre of the ceiling hung a small Chinese lantern.

"The Beauty?"

In the recess of the solitary window, on a stand, stood a compound birdcage, *à la* Bechstein, en-

closing a globe of gold fish, and surmounted by a basket of flowers. The floor,—which was Turkey carpeted—

"The Beauty? the Beauty?"

The floor was littered with various articles, including a guitar,—a large porcelain jar,—and a little wicker-work kennel for a lapdog,—but the dog like the parrot was deficient.

"The Beauty? the Beauty? the Beauty?"

"My dear madam, pray have a little patience, and read "Blue Beard;" how nearly his last wife was destroyed by her curiosity. My mystery is not yet ripe, and you have even less right to the key of my Romance than Fatima had to the key of the Bloody Chamber.

CHAPTER VIII.

Every person of common observation must have remarked the vast contrast between the carriage of a man going *up*, and the bearing of the same man going *down* in the world!

In the first case how he trips, how he brightens, how he jokes, how he laughs, how he dances, how he sings, how he whistles, how he admires, how he loves; in the second predicament—how he stumps, how he glumps, how he sneers, how he satirizes,

how he grumbles, how he frowns, how he vilifies, how he hates—in short, how he behaves with a difference, like Mr. Booby.

As he ascended Grove-hill his step was brisk and elastic, he simpered complacently, held his bouquet mincingly in his lemon-coloured glove, and had his new hat stuck jauntily a little on one side of his head.

As he descended the steep, his tread was heavy, sometimes amounting to a stamp, the flowers had been thrashed into a bundle of stalks, the delicate kid glove was being gnawed into a mitten, and the bran new beaver was sullenly thrust down over his eyebrows.

As he mounted, his eyes were cast upward towards the elm-tree tops, as if looking for birds' nests.

As he descended, his eyes were turned to the gravel-path, as if in search of Brazilian pebbles.

As he went up, he hummed "La çi darem."

As he went down, he muttered curses between his teeth.

In going up, he had carefully picked his way, avoiding every dirty spot.

In going down, he tramped recklessly through the mud, and stepped into the very middle of the puddles.

"And had the Beauty slighted him?"

Why, those persons who saw him come out of the house-door, remarked as he stumbled down the steps, that his face was as red and hot as a fiery furnace: others, who did not notice him till he had cleared the front garden-gate, observed that his complexion was as pale as ashes. And both reports were true, for like the Factions of the Red and White Roses, did Anger and Vexation alternately domineer and hoist their colours by turns in his countenance.

"But had the Beauty really behaved ill to him?"

Why, in going to the house he had conducted himself towards men, women, and children, with a studied and almost affected courtesy; whereas in going from the premises he jostled the gentlemen, took the wall of ladies, punched each little boy who came within reach of his arm, and kicked every dog that ran within range of his foot.

"Then she *had* been scornful to him!"

Every body in the street looked after him. Some thought that he was mad; some, that he was in liquor—others, that he was walking for a wager, and, from his ill temper, that he was losing it.

"Poor man!"

However, on he went, striding, frowning, mut-

tering, and swearing, gnawing one kid glove, and shaking the other like a muffin-bell. On he went —like an overdriven beast—on through Church-street, and away across the Green, kicking hoops, tops, and marbles; thumping little boys, and poking little girls, snubbing nursemaids, making faces at their babies, and grinning viciously at everything in nature that came within his scope. He was out of humour with heaven and earth. It pleased him to know, by a sudden yell in the road, that a cur was run over; and he was rather glad than otherwise to see a horse in the pound.

"Poor fellow! how cruelly he must have been treated!"

Well, on he went to the Red Cap, where an omnibus was just on the point of starting.

It was invitingly empty, so without asking whether it went to the East or West End, in jumped Mr. Booby, and threw himself on the centre seat at the further end of the vehicle. And now, for the first time, he had leisure to feel that he had been worked and walked, morally as well as physically, into a violent heat. He let down all the windows that would go down, tugged out his handkerchief, wiped the dew from his face, and then fanned himself with his hat. The process somewhat cooled the outer man, but his temper

remained as warm as ever, and at last found vent.

"Confound the old fool!" he exclaimed, with an angry stamp on the floor of the omnibus—"Confound the old fool with her Camberwell Beauty! Why didn't she tell me it was a Butterfly!"*

EPIGRAM

ON THE DEPRECIATED MONEY.

THEY may talk of the plugging and sweating
Of our coinage that's minted of gold,
But to me it produces no fretting
Of its shortness of weight to be told:
All the sov'reigns I'm able to levy
As to lightness can never be wrong,
But must surely be some of the heavy,
For I never can carry them long.

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* *Vanessa Antiopa*—deriving its English name from having been first observed at the suburban village in Surrey. The famous clown, Grimaldi, who was a butterfly-fancier, described the Camberwell Beauty as "very ugly."

THE LITTLE BROWNS.

TAKING into account the peculiar circumstances of the country, and the particular juncture, coincident with the depreciation of our gold money, there is something strange and puzzling about the proposed issue of a new coinage of Half-Farthings.

In a cheap country one can understand the utility and convenience of such small monies:—for example, in France or Belgium with their centimes —or in Germany with its pfennings, ten of which are equivalent to one of our pence. For in any of these lands it is still possible to procure some article or other in exchange for a coin of the lowest denomination: but in England, dear England, what is there that one can purchase for such a mite as one of the new fractions? Nothing. The traditionary farthing rushlight has risen to four times the price, and the old ha'penny roll has rolled into a penny one. And half a farthing? The only commodity I know of to be obtained for such a trifle is—kicks!

I'd kick him for half a farthing.

It is barely possible, however, that at the street stalls, or in hawkers' baskets, there may be some-

thing in the lozenge or lollipop line to be bought for one of these new doits. But the issue of a new coinage, of a novel value, expressly for the convenience of little children with limited incomes, is a thing not to be supposed.

It is not likely, either, that the penny has thus been split into eighths, because the oranges have been eight for sixpence; neither is it probable that our copper currency has been chopped so small only to make it more like mint sauce.

Is it possible that, alarmed by the depreciation of our sovereigns, our rulers have thought of producing a coin not valuable enough for plugging—and too little and light for sweating—even in the present warm weather?

Is it plausible that to meet the haggling which hard times will produce, these copper minims have been invented so that two merchants or Brokers who have boggled about a farthing, may split the difference and effect a bargain? Such a supposition were too derogatory to our modern Greshams.

A certain Journal, indeed, has hinted that the measure will benefit the poor, by their receiving fractions which hitherto have never been given to the petty purchaser; but surely this argument is untenable, for will not the same coinage enable the seller to impose a fraction hitherto impracticable

on his article—for example, a penny and one-eighth on his bun or roll?

The new denomination can hardly be intended—against an universal Income Tax—to enable a man with fourpence-farthing a year to pay three per cent on his annuity. The Victoria D. G. on the new coin, would never lend her royal countenance to any such speculation.

Is it possible, in consideration of the dearness of bread, that the Lilliputian currency has been invented for the purchase of such tiny little loaves as Gulliver used to devour by the dozen? Alas! the people who make money are not so considerate for those who don't!

With none of these views is it likely that the Demi Farthings have been minted—nor yet to encourage low play, by furnishing almost nominal stakes for short whist and games of chance.

To what purpose, then, have the dwarf coppers been introduced? There still remains one use for them, and really it appears on plausible grounds to have been the very use intended by the authors of the measure—namely, to be given away.

The universal distress of the working classes—the rapid increase of pauperism, and the broad hint which has been thrown out, that the wants of the starving population must be provided for by

voluntary contribution, tend strongly to favour this hypothesis. The man and woman with a spare penny—the lady and gentleman with a spare shilling, will be enabled, by this very small change, to enlarge the sphere of their benevolence; and the noble philanthropist, whose generosity amounts to a guinea, may have a thousand beggars beset his gate, and "none go unrelieved away!" Yes—thanks to our mint-masters, we shall be indulged with cheap charity, if nothing else!

But besides the mendicants, the minute coin will be serviceable to give to children,—to crossing sweepers, watermen, Jacks-in-the-water, and other humble officials, who look to ladies and gentlemen for fees. Whether the Half-Farthings will do to tip servants, guards, chamber-maids, stage-coachmen, waiters, or box-keepers, is more problematical: how it might answer to slip such a gratuity into the itching palm of a powdered portly Footman, or Hall Porter, in crimson and gold, or sky blue and silver—one of those pampered menials who lounge about the doors of Portland Place, and vainly ask each other the meaning of "Destitution in the Metropolis"—how it might do, to present such a tipping to such a topping personage, to offer such tribute money to such a Cæsar, is very, very questionable: but in these hard times, when

every retrenchment is desirable, the experiment at least ought to be made—nay, should even a young lady call with her subscription-book to beg for something for the little Blacks, it might not be amiss to introduce her to the little Browns.

THE TURTLES:

A FABLE.

The rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle.—BYRON.

ONE day, it was before a civic dinner,
Two London Aldermen, no matter which,
Cordwainer, Girdler, Patten-maker, Skinner—
But both were florid, corpulent, and rich,
And both right fond of festive demolition,
Set forth upon a secret expedition.
Yet not, as might be fancied from the token,
To Pudding Lane, Pie Corner, or the Street
Of Bread, or Grub, or anything to eat,
Or drink, as Milk, or Vintry, or Portsoken,
But eastward to that more aquatic quarter,
Where folks take water,
Or bound on voyages, secure a berth
For Antwerp or Ostend, Dundee or Perth,
Calais, Boulogne, or any Port on earth!

Jostled and jostling, through the mud,
Peculiar to the Town of Lud,
Down narrow streets and crooked lanes they div'd,

Past many a gusty avenue, through which
Came yellow fog, and smell of pitch,
From barge, and boat, and dusky wharf deriv'd;
With darker fumes, brought eddying by the draught,
From loco-smoko-motive craft;
Mingling with scents of butter, cheese, and gammons,
Tea, coffee, sugar, pickles, rosin, wax,
Hides, tallow, Russia-matting, hemp and flax,
Salt-cod, red-herrings, sprats, and kipper'd salmons,
Nuts, oranges, and lemons,
Each pungent spice, and aromatic gum,
Gas, pepper, soaplees, brandy, gin, and rum;
Alamode-beef and greens—the London soil—
Glue, coal, tobacco, turpentine, and oil,
Bark, asafœtida, squills, vitriol, hops,
In short, all whiffs, and sniffs, and puffs, and snuffs,
From metals, minerals, and dyewood stuffs,
Fruits, victual, drink, solidities, or slops—
In flasks, casks, bales, trucks, waggons, taverns, shops,
Boats, lighters, cellars, wharfs, and warehouse-tops,
That, as we walk upon the river's ridge,
Assault the nose—below the bridge.

A walk, however, as tradition tells,
That once a poor blind Tobit used to choose,
Because, incapable of other views,
He met with "such a sight of smells."

But on, and on, and on,
In spite of all unsavoury shocks,
Progress the stout Sir Peter and Sir John,
Steadily steering ship-like for the docks—
And now they reach a place the Muse, unwilling,
Recals for female slang and vulgar doing,
The famous Gate of Billing
That does not lead to cooing—
And now they pass that House that is so ugly
A Customer to people looking smuggl'y—
And now along that fatal Hill they pass
Where centuries ago an Oxford bled,
And prov'd—too late to save his life, alas!—
That *he* was "off his head."

At last before a lofty brick-built pile
Sir Peter stopped, and with mysterious smile
Tingled a bell that served to bring
The wire-drawn genius of the ring,
A species of commercial Samuel Weller—
To whom Sir Peter, tipping him a wink,
And something else to drink,
"Show us the cellar."

Obsequious bowed the man, and led the way
Down sundry flights of stairs, where windows small,
Dappled with mud, let in a dingy ray—
A dirty tax, if they were tax'd at all,

At length they came into a cellar damp,
With venerable cobwebs fringed around,
A cellar of that stamp
Which often harbours vintages renown'd,
The feudal Hock, or Burgundy the courtly,
With sherry, brown or golden,
Or port, so olden,
Bereft of body 'tis no longer portly—
But old or otherwise—to be veracious—
That cobwebb'd cellar, damp, and dim, and spacious,
Held nothing crusty—but crustaceous.

Prone, on the chilly floor,
Five splendid Turtles—such a five!
Natives of some West Indian shore
Were flapping all alive,
Late landed from the Jolly Planter's yawl—
A sight whereon the dignitaries fix'd
Their eager eyes, with extasy unmix'd,
Like fathers that behold their infants crawl,
Enjoying every little kick and sprawl.
Nay—far from fatherly the thoughts they bred,
Poor loggerheads from far Ascension ferried!
The Aldermen too plainly wish'd them dead
And Aldermanbury'd!

"There!" cried Sir Peter, with an air
Triumphant as an ancient victor's,
And pointing to the creatures rich and rare,
"There's picters!"

"Talk of Olympic Games! They're not worth mention;
The real prize for wrestling is when Jack,
In Providence or Ascension,
Can throw a lively turtle on its back!"

"Aye!" cried Sir John, and with a score of nods,
Thoughtful of classical symposium,
"There's food for Gods!
There's nectar! there's ambrosium!
There's food for Roman Emperors to eat—
Oh, there had been a treat
(Those ancient names will sometimes hobble us)
For Helio-gobble-us!"

"There were a feast for Alexander's Feast!
The real sort—none of your mock or spurious!"
And then he mentioned Aldermen deceased,
And "Epicurius,"
And how Tertullian had enjoyed such foison;
And speculated on that *verdigrease*
That isn't poison.

"Talk of your Spring, and verdure, and all that!
Give *me* green fat!
As for your Poets with their groves of myrtles
And billing turtles,
Give me, for poetry, them Turtles there,
A-billing in a bill of fare!"

"Of all the things I ever swallow—
Good, well-dressed turtle beats them hollow—
It almost makes me wish, I vow,
To have *two* stomachs, like a cow!"
And lo! as with the cud, an inward thrill
Upheaved his waistcoat and disturb'd his frill,
His mouth was oozing and he work'd his jaw—
"I almost think that I could eat one raw!"

And thus, as "inward love breeds outward talk,"
The portly pair continued to discourse;
And then—as Gray describes of life's divorce,—
With "longing lingering look" prepared to walk,
Having thro' one delighted sense, at least,
Enjoy'd a sort of Barmecidal feast,
And with prophetic gestures, strange to see,
Forestall'd the civic Banquet yet to be,
Its callipash and callipee!

A pleasant prospect—but alack!
Scarcely each Alderman had turn'd his back,

When seizing on the moment so propitious,
And having learn'd that they were so delicious
To bite and sup,
From praises so high flown and injudicious,—
And nothing could be more pernicious!
The Turtles fell to work, and ate each other up!

MORAL.

Never, from folly or urbanity,
Praise people thus profusely to their faces,
Till quite in love with their own graces,
They're eaten up by vanity!

EPIGRAM.

THREE traitors,—Oxford—Francis—Bean,
Have miss'd their wicked aim;
And may all shots against the Queen,
In future do the same:
For why, I mean no turn of wit,
But seriously insist,
That if Her Majesty were *hit*,
No one would be so *miss'd*.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A PHŒNIX.

How! dead!
How dead? Why very dead indeed!
KILLING NO MURDER.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS once dead.

"Eh! how! what!" interrupts the Courteous Reader, naturally startled by such a posthumous announcement.

"What! dead, dead, dead!" inquires a Criminal Judge, unconsciously using the legal formula.

"What! food for worms?" exclaims a great Tragedian.

"What! gone to another and a better world?" says a sentimental spinster.

"Or to a wus," snuffles a sanctified shoemaker.

"What, to that bourne," says a Bagman, "to which no traveller makes more than one journey?"

"What,—unriddled that great enigma!" cries a metaphysician, "of which we obtain no solution but by dissolution?"

"Or, in plain English, *Hic Jacet?*" puts in an Undertaker.

"What, hopped the twig?—kicked the bucket?

—bowled out?—gone to pot?—mizzled?—ticked off?—struck off the roster!—slipped your cable?—lost the number of your mess?" ask as many professional querists.

"Oh! a case of suspended animation—hung and cut down!"

"Or a cut throat, and sewed up?"

"Poisoned and pumped out?" hints a Medical Student.

"Drowned, and 'unsuffocated gratis?'" quotes a reader of "Don Juan."

"Or buried in a trance?" guesses a Transcendental speculator.

"Poo, poo! he means dead-beat," cries a Sportsman.

"Or dead lame," prompts a Veterinarian.

"Or dead asleep," proposes a Mesmerizer.

"Or dead drunk," mutters a Tea-totaller.

"Or only metaphorically," suggests a Poet.

But begging the pardon of the Poet, the Tea-totaller, the Mesmerizer, the Horse-Doctor, and the Student, I had no such meaning: but that I was departed, deceased, demised, defunct, or whatever term may denote the grand Terminus.

"What! as dead as a house—as a herring—as a door-nail—as dumps—as ditch-water—as mutton——"

Yes—or as Cheops, or Julius Cæsar, or Giles Scroggins, or Miss Bailey. In short, as declared before, I was once dead—a regular subject for the Necrologist—an entry for the Registrar—an item for the Obituary as thus:

On the 3d instant, suddenly, Peregrine Phœnix, Esq., of Clapham Rise.

CHAPTER II.

"To be sure," murmurs Memory, applying her right forefinger to her forehead, and pressing on her own organ, "to be sure there have been many persons who, though seemingly dead, and even interred, have afterwards returned to life. For example: the wife of Reichmuth Adolch, the Councillor of Cologne, who died of the plague, and was buried with a diamond ring on her finger, and was revived by the violence of the thievish sexton in wrenching off the ornament. Then there was Monsieur François de Civille, thrice coffined and thrice restored; not to forget the romantic tale of the lady of Nicholas Chassenemi, who was rescued from the grave by her old lover Cariscendi. Also, the Honourable Mrs. Godfrey, Mistress of the Robes to Queen Anne, and sister of the great Duke of Marlborough, who

lay in a trance for a week. Then there was Isabella Wilson, who, after eleven days of rigid insensibility, would have been entombed but for the interference of the Doctor, who felt some warmth about the heart; and Mr. Cowherd, of Cartmell, Lancashire, who revived after being laid out; and Isaac Rooke, who revived after a coroner had been summoned; and Walter Wynkbourne, executed on the gallows at Leicester in 1350—but jolted to life in a cart. Above all, there was Anne Green, who, after being hung and pulled by the legs, and struck on the chest by the butt-end of a musket, yet recovered, and married and bore three children."

"Hout aye," chimes in a Scottish Mnemosyne. "And there was yon Ill-hangit Maggie, as they ca'd her."

"Yaw, yaw," adds a Teutonic Remembrancer. "Also dere vas de Yarman, Martin Grab, who comed to himself quite lively, after he was a copse."

And so he did. And thereby hangs a tale of the DEAD-ALIVE, which will serve for a fresh chapter.

CHAPTER III.

In the Free City of Frankfort-on-the-Maine, the bodies of the dead are not kept for several days, as with us, in the house of mourning, but are promptly removed to a public cemetery. In order to guard, however, against premature interment, the remains are always retained above ground till certain signs of decomposition are apparent; and besides this precaution, in case of suspended animation, the fingers of the corpse are fastened to a bell-rope, communicating with an alarum, so that on the slightest movement the body rings for the help which it requires for its resuscitation—a watcher and a medical attendant being constantly at hand.

Now the duty of answering the Life-bell had devolved on one Peter Klopp—no very onerous service, considering that for thirty years since he had been the official "Death Watch," the metallic tongue of the alarum had never sounded a single note. The defunct Frankforters committed to his charge had remained, one and all, man, woman, and child, as stiff, as still, and as silent, as so many stocks and stones. Not that in every case the vital principle was necessarily extinct: in some bodies out of so many thousands it doubtless lin-

gered, like a spark amongst the ashes—but disinclined by the national phlegm to any active assertion of its existence.

For a German, indeed, there is a charm in a certain vaporous dreamy state, between life and death, between sleeping and waking, which a Transcendental Spirit would not willingly dissolve. Be that as it might, the deceased Frankforters all lay in their turns in the Corpse-Chamber, as passive as statues in marble. Not a limb stirred—not a muscle twitched—not a finger contracted, and consequently not a note sounded to startle the ear or try the nerves of Peter Klopp.

In fine, he became a confirmed sceptic as to such resuscitations. The bell had never rung, and he felt certain that it never would ring—unless from the vibrations of an earthquake. No, no—Death and the Doctors did their work too surely for their patients to relapse into life in any such manner. And truly, it is curious to observe that in proportion to the multiplication of Physicians, and the progress of Medical science, the number of Revivals has decreased. The Exanimate no longer rally as they used to do some centuries since—when Aloys Schneider was restored by the jolting of his own coffin, and Margaret Schöning, leaving her death-bed, walked down to supper in her last linen.

So reasoned Peter Klopp, who, long past the first tremors and fancies of his noviciate, had come, by dint of custom, to look at the bodies in his care but as so many logs or bales of goods committed to the temporary custody of a Plutonian warehouseman, or Lethean wharfinger. But he was doomed to be signally undeceived.

In the month of September, just after the autumnal Frankfort Fair, Martin Grab, a middle aged man, of plethoric habit, after dining heartily on soup, sour krout, veal-cutlets with bullace sauce, carp in wine-jelly, blood-sausage, wild boar brawn, herring salad, sweet pudding, Leipsic larks, sour cream with cinnamon, and a bowlfull of plums, by way of dessert—suddenly dropped down insensible. As he was pronounced to be dead by the Doctor, the body was conveyed, as usual, within twelve hours, to the public cemetery, where being deposited in the Corpse-Chamber, the rest was left to the care and vigilance of the Death-Watch, Peter Klopp.

Accordingly, having taken a last look at his old acquaintance, he carefully twisted the rope of the Life-Bell round the dead man's fingers, and then retiring into his own sanctorum, lighted his pipe, and was soon in that foggy Paradise, which a true German would not exchange for all the odour of Araby the Blessed, and the society of the Houris.

"And did the fat man come to life again?"

Patience, my dear madam, patience, and you shall hear.

It was past midnight, and in the Corpse-Chamber, hung with dismal black, the lifeless body of Martin Grab was lying in its shroud as still as a marble statue. At his head, the solitary funeral lamp burned without a flicker—there was no breath of air to disturb the flame, or to curve the long spider-lines that hung perpendicularly from the ceiling. The silence was intense. You might have heard the ghost of a whisper or the whisper of a ghost, if there had been one present to utter it—but the very air seemed dead and stagnant—not elastic enough for a sigh even from a spirit.

In the adjoining room reposed the Death-Watch, Peter Klopp. He had thrown himself, in his clothes, on his little bed, with his pipe still between his lips. Here, too, all was silent and still. Not a cricket chirped—nor a mouse stirred—nor a draught of air. The light smoke of the pipe mounted directly upward, and mingled with its cloudlike shadows on the ceiling. The eye would have detected the flitting of a mote, the ear would have caught the rustling of a straw, but all was quiet as the grave, still as its steadfast tombs—when suddenly the shrill hurried peal of the alarm-bell—the very same sound which for fifteen long

years he had nightly listened for—the very same sound that for as many long years he had utterly ceased to expect—abruptly startled the slumbering senses of Peter Klopp!

In an instant he was out of bed and on his feet, but without the power of further progress. His terror was extreme. To be waked suddenly in a fright is sufficiently dreadful; but to be roused in the dead of the night by so awful a summons—by a call, as it were, from beyond the grave, to help the invisible spirit—perhaps a Demon's—to reanimate a cold, clammy Corpse,—what wonder that the poor wretch stood shuddering, choking, gasping for breath, with his hair standing upright on his head, his eyes starting out of their orbits, his teeth chattering, his hands clutched, his limbs paralyzed, and a cold sweat oozing out from every pore of his body! In the first spasm of horror his jaws had collapsed with such force, that he had bitten through the stem of his pipe, the bowl and stalk falling to the floor, whilst the mouthpiece passed into his throat, and agitated him with new convulsions. In the very crisis of this struggle, a loud crash resounded from the Corpse-Chamber—then came a rattling noise, as of loose boards, followed by a stifled cry—then a strange, unearthly shout, which the Death-Watch answered with as

unnatural a shriek, and instantly fell headlong, on his face, to the stone-floor!

"Poor fellow! Why, it was enough to kill him."

It did, madam. The noise alarmed the resident doctor and the military patrole, who rushed into the building, and lo! a strange and horrid sight! There lay on the ground the unfortunate Death-Watch, stiff and insensible; whilst the late Corpse, in its grave clothes, bent over him, eagerly administering the stimulants, and applying the restoratives that had been prepared against its own revival. But all human help was in vain. Peter Klopp was no more—whereas Martin Grab was alive, and actually stepping into the dead man's shoes, became, and is at this day, the official Death-Watch at Frankfort-on-the-Maine.

CHAPTER IV.

"And do you really mean to say, sir," exclaims a vulgar-looking personage, in a black rusty suit, with black-silk gloves, black-cotton stockings, and a hat of two colours, black and sleek at bottom, aud brown and shabby at top; a figure, a good deal like a decayed apothecary of the old school—"Do you really mean to say,

sir, that you hactually obiited and resurgam'd like the apoplectic German gemman as ate such a wery hearty last meal ?"

Well, and what then?

"Why, then, sir, it's the beer, that's all."

The bier?

"Yes, the double X. You see, sir, the truth is, I've laid myself three quarterns of rum to a pot of ale, as how it was not a reglar requiescat, not a boney fide Celo quies, but only a weekly dispatch."

A *Weekly Dispatch?*

"Yes, or a Morning Post Mortum. Not a natural hexit, you know. Not a true Bill of Mortality,—but that you was only killed by the perodical press, like Lord Brougham!"

Humph! That such a rusty raven should pluck out the heart of my mystery! That such a walking shadow should throw a light on my enigma! But the fellow's guess is correct. I died only in print. The great Composer had no hand in it: my everlasting rest was set up by a compositor of the *Morning Herald!*

"*On the 3d instant, suddenly, Peregrine Phœnix, Esq., of Clapham Rise.*"

CHAPTER V.

What a strange sensation it caused, the reading of that mortal paragraph! A feeling only to be understood by those who have been put out of the world by the Globe, had their days ended by the Sun, been posted to eternity by the Post, or sent on their last journey by the Evening Mail!

The newspaper that morning came late; and when the fatal sentence met my glance, I was, like Hamlet's father, "full of bread." I had already finished my morning's repast, but by an instinctive impulse, I took another egg, and began breakfasting over again. A sort of practical assertion of the animal functions—and I never enjoyed a meal so much in my life. What a zest it had! Each separate morsel by its peculiar substance, flavour, or aroma, giving the lie, backed by the three senses of Touch, Taste, and Smell, to that abominable announcement! The noble Athelstane, when he escaped in his grave-clothes from the funeral vault of St. Edmond's Abbey, did not attack the venison-pasty and the wine-bottle with more relish! There was a certain pleasure even in a crumb's going the wrong way!

"What!" exclaims Civic Apoplexy, his face

as crimson as the wattles of an enraged turkey-cock, his tongue struggling for utterance, and his eyes protruding, like pupils about to be expelled by the head master, "a comfort in choking!"

Yes, my dear Alderman, as an evidence of active existence. Unlike the race-horse, every cough is in your favour.

For my own part, oh, how vividly I delighted in the grating in the throat, the soreness of the lungs, the watering of the eyes, which told, how instead of being dead, I had merely lost my breath! How deliciously I enjoyed every symptom, otherwise disagreeable, of vitality! The imputed absence of my life made me intensely sensible of its presence. I felt, methought, the warm blood coursing through my veins and arteries, and tingling in the very nails of my fingers and toes. Every movement of the machine, beforetime withdrawn from notice, had become decidedly perceptible. I had a distinct notion of the peristaltic motion, and seemed absolutely conscious of the growth of my hair!

"What, without Macassar! Impossible!"

Perhaps so, Mr. Rowland, but it seemed probable. And then how delightedly I strutted about, and boxed with Nobody, and fenced with my own shadow, and spouted like a 'Bartlemy Tragedian.

No, no—I was not dead. A gentleman who eats two breakfasts

> And lightly draws his breath,
> And feels his life in ev'ry limb,
> What should he know of Death?

My next act was to ring for my servant, who entered, and found me grimacing before the looking-glass—dead men don't make faces.

"John, where was I, and what did I do on Friday last, the 3d instant?"

"Let me see—you rowed on the river, sir, in the wherry."

"What, with Charon?"

"No, sir, with Mr. Emery."

"Very good, that will do, John."

And joyous as a blackbird in Spring, I began to whistle Dibdin's air of "Jack's Alive." By an association of ideas, Dibdin's verses put me in mind of Sterne, and darting off at a tangent to my library I pulled down the first volume of Tristram Shandy, and began to read aloud the extempore lecture of Corporal Trim on the text of "Are we not here now, and are we not gone in a moment?" with his cocked hat illustration of sudden death. "But I am alive," said the foolish, fat scullion.

Oh, how I admired that fat scullion! I could

have hugged her in spite of her grease—our feelings, our sympathies were in such perfect unison! Trim's Funeral Sermon had been to her the same in effect as my obituary paragraph in the *Herald.*

In the mean time, the ten o'clock Clapham omnibus called for me as usual; I put on my hat and gloves, took my walking-stick (the dead don't walk with sticks), got into the vehicle, seated myself, and remarked with a smile all round,

"Well this is better than a hearse."

A speech natural and significant enough under my peculiar circumstances, but to the rest of the company, who wanted the key, a mere impertinent truism.

One gentleman in particular seemed personally disgusted and offended by the observation, and on glancing at his beaver, I perceived he wore a hatband. Somebody dead of course—but it was not Peregrine Phœnix, Esquire, of Clapham Rise, a reflection which made that vivacious personage as merry as the music after a soldier's funeral.

The confinement of the omnibus, and the reserve of its passengers, ere long became intolerable; the first cramped the physical activity, and the last checked the flow of animal spirits of a man more alive than common. So taking a hearty tug at the conductor's dreadnought, I was set down,

and walked off at the rate of four miles an hour, and humming,

Life let us cherish,

along the London-road. But I was soon arrested by a spectacle of uncommon interest—an undertaker's shop, with all the grim and glittering emblems of the craft in the window. I had passed them a hundred times before without notice, but now the establishment had for me all the interest of an exhibition.

I examined every painted scutcheon, as if for an æsthetic critique—scrutinized the mottoes and inscriptions as for an archæological essay—examined each crest and blazonry with heraldic relish, and inspected the shining coffin-plates and handles with the zest of an antiquary poring over rusty pieces of antique armour. A device of a flying cherub was gazed at like a design of Raffaele's, and the notification of "Funerals Performed," was read over and over again like a love posy. But above all, I was smitten with an emblem which had formerly seemed rather a repulsive one—a Death's head and cross-bones—especially the dreary skull with its vacant eyelet holes, and that sardonic grin—whereas now, a laughing eye within the dark cavity seemed to tip me a knowing wink, and the ghastly grin was become a smile so contagious, that I felt myself smiling from ear to ear.

All this time the hammer had sounded merrily—yes, *merrily* from the interior of the shop, and looking in at the door, I saw the master, with his journeyman, busied in the last decoration of a handsome black coffin, lined with white-satin—to some, perhaps, a dismal object, but to me a poetical one, like

——————— A sable cloud
That turns its silver lining on the night.

I read the name engraved on the silver plate thrice over, and with a novel but pleasant curiosity, informed myself minutely of all the particulars of the age, business, and circumstances of the deceased.

And when, pray, did the poor gentleman die?

"On the 3d instant, sir, rather suddenly."

The very day that *I* did not!—Oh! the electric thrill of life that ran through every fibre of my frame at that coincidence of dates! The vivid revelation of a stirring, vital principle, that glowed from head to heel! I am convinced that for a man to know, to feel, to enjoy his existence, to be properly conscious of his being, he must be put into the Obituary! Till then, he is like the flounders that didn't flounder.

"But the fish are dead," objected the Cook.

"Not them," said the Fishwoman, tossing the last flounder into the blue and white dish. "Just

see how they'll kick when they comes to the hot lard. Why, bless ye, they're as alive as you are, only they don't know it till they're put in the pan."

CHAPTER VI.

"Then after all," says Mrs. Grundy, a lively, loquacious old lady, familiarly known to a very wide circle of friends and acquaintance, "it is not so very disagreeable to be killed by the press?"

By no means, madam—rather reviving than otherwise—as good as a sniff of hartshorn, sal volatile, or aromatic vinegar, and much more agreeable than burnt-feathers—a bunch of black ostrich-plumes always excepted.

"Well, I should have thought that such a broad hint in black and white would be a memento mori,—a sort of 'Philip, remember thou art mortal.'"

"Quite the reverse, ma'am. A memento vitæ—a fillip to the animal spirits—a "remember thou art alive." Dead men, you know, don't read their own obituaries.

"True. Nevertheless, the sudden shock of such a frigid announcement—"

Like the shock of a shower-bath, ma'am. Cold, but bracing; and for a phlegmatic temperament,

the finest and safest stimulus in the world! Gives a glow to the skin—a healthy tone to the nerves—improves the appetite, corrects the spleen, and tickles the cockles of the heart and the risible muscles. You have heard, ma'am, of a lightening before death?

"Yes—Romeo alludes to it."

Well, it's nothing to the lightening after it! I mean in print. Talk of Parr's Life Pills, or the Elixir Vitæ!—a kill by the press is the Grand Catholicon—a specific for ennui or tedium vitæ, a sovereign remedy for Hypochondriasis, and infallible for Suicidal Monomania! Only let a newspaper hint that you are a corpse, and it makes you *quite another thing*—a Harlequin, a Rope-dancer, a Tumbler, a Dancing Fakir, a Springheel'd Jack. But not to advertise a remedy without a case,—there was Lord Cowdenknows, who was killed by the *Times*.

"Ah, by an upset of his carriage."

Yes—with one horse's hoof on his sternum, another on his os-frontis, a wheel on his epigastrium, and the broken axletree through his abdomen. No mortal was ever *pressed* to death more completely—and what is the result? Why, an intense consciousness of his existence, and the continual assertion of his vitality by a vivacious volubility and volatility amounting almost to a

nuisance. He reminds us that Lord Cowdenknows is alive with a vengeance!—his enemies by astounding pats on the head and confounding slaps on the back; and his friends by disconcerting digs in the ribs, or staggering punches in the stomach. No practical joker in the exuberance of his animal spirits ever played more pranks. On one head he pours melted-butter, on a second cold water, on a third vinegar, smears a fourth with honey, a fifth with cantharides, a sixth with treacle, a seventh with tar, an eighth with bear's-grease, a ninth with mustard, a tenth with cold-cream, an eleventh with paste, a twelfth with cowage, and then daubs an unlucky Quaker with ink. One he trips up, and astonishes another with a *coup de pied.* In short, he is all alive and kicking—'all manner of ways.'"

CHAPTER VII.

"Now I think of it," says Mnemosyne, again pressing the organ of memory with her right forefinger, and gently smiling as if some pleasant image rose up before the mental eye, "there was Squire Foxall, a martyr to that melancholy humour called Hypochondriasis, and who was cured by the Press. Many a serio-comic scene there was between the master and his man Roger, a confidential servant of the old school, shrewd, trusty, and as blunt as a spade."

"Well, Roger, the master would say, after a very long and solemn shaking of his head, "I am going at last."

"Glad on it—to Swaffham, in course?"

"No, Roger, no—to another world."

"What, to Amerikey?"

"No, to another and a better one, Roger—to the world of spirits."

"Ah, that's along o' missing your brandy—you be low, you be."

"Not so low as I shall be, Roger. I'm at death's door—I have double knocked, and am scraping my shoes, and it will soon be, walk in. Now, Roger, remember when I'm gone that Mr. Bewlay——"

"Yes, yes—I know. He have got the last o' your last wills. Your nevy will come into the land, and your neice is to have your personal bulk."

"No, Roger—that was the will before. I've made another since then—but no matter. I've done with money and land. All I require now is a little turf."

"Well—there's a whole stack on it i' the rick-yard, and when you've burnt out that——"

"Never, Roger, never! I'm burnt out myself—quite down in the socket, and shall go off like a snuff. I am ready, Roger, for the garner."

"Yes, yes, and corn for the sickle, and grass for the scythe, and a ripe plum for the basket, and a brown leaf for hopping the twig. I know all that by heart."

"I'm a dying man, Roger, and you know it. I haven't twelve hours to live—no, not six, before I pay the debt of nature."

"Dang the debt o' nature! I wish you had none to settle but hern. But it arn't do yet it arn't."

"Due, and overdue, Roger. The receipt's made out, and before to-morrow you will have another master."

"No, I shan't. I harn't had no warnin."

"But *I* have, Roger. Here, feel my pulse. It stopped just now for two minutes and a half. The circulation is at a stand-still—the heart cannot perform its functions."

"All moonshine, master. It's performing its funkings at this minit. It's going as regular as the eight-day clock—I can a' most hear un tick."

"No, no, Roger—that's impossible."

"Is it? Then why do Dr. Darby try to hear it with his telescope?"

"Stethoscope, Roger—ste-thos-cope. There may be hypertrophy for all that. But you know I can't argue with you. My lungs are quite gone—quite!"

"No wonder—you've been blowin 'em up this ten year."

"They're destroyed, Roger. Pulmonary consumption has set in—"

"Yes, yes, I know—and they're full of tuberroses."

"Tubercles, man—and my liver is in no better state."

"No—they're schismatic. And you've got an absence in your inside—"

"An abscess."

"Well, an abscess in your stomach, and can't disgest properly for want of gas-water."

"A deficiency of the gastric juice. It is all too true, Roger. Every organ I have is out of order."

"Then I would'nt play on 'em. Well, what next? Why, you've got a gatherin in your lumbering progresses."

"Lumbar processes—"

"Which in course affects the head, and so you've got a confusion of water on the brain. Then you've had an eclectic fit, and three parallel strokes —and there's your stertian ague, and the intermediate fever—"

"Intermitting."

"Then, there's the inflammation of your mucus members—"

"Membrane, membrane."

"Well, membrane. Next there's your vertical headach—"

"Vertigo."

"And lord knows what in your intestates and viceruses. Then there's your legs with their various veins—"

"Varicose."

"And as to your feet, what with hoppin gout in them—and flying gout in your stomach—and swimming gout in your head—you're gout all over."

"Yes, Roger, yes—it has got hold of my whole system, sure enough. But it's apoplexy I'm afraid of—apoplexy, Roger. I have giddiness, tinnitus, congestion, lethargy—every symptom in the book!"

"Dang the books—it's them has done it! There's Doctor Imray's Family Physicker, you've giv yourself over ever since you brought it home. And then there's Doctor Winslows' book, and Doctor Frankum's, as made you believe between 'em, that you'd got a turned head and a pendulum belly—"

"Pendulous, Roger, pendulous."

"Well, it's all one. And then their plaguy formuluses for making up your own prescriptions. You'll proscribe yourself into heaven, you will some day, with your blue pills and hydrangea powders—"

"Hydrarge powders."

"It can't be good for nobody to swallow so much calumny. And then your dabblin with them deadly pisons, though you know as well as I do, that three Prussian Acidulated Drops would kill a horse."

"You mean Prussic acid. But in some affections, Roger, it is of great service."

"Yes, like Oxonian acid, for boot-tops. Then,

there's the newspapers. I do believe there an't a quack medicine advertised, but you've tried 'em all, from Cockle's Antibiling pills, and the Febrifudges, to Sarcy Barilla. Lord! lord! the heaps of nasty messes you have swallowed sure-ly! Not to forget the Horse Physic you took arter readin in Doctor Elliotson that the human two-legged specious could ketch the glanders!"

"And was the poor man cured of his Hypochondriasis?"

Yes, by the *County Chronicle*, into which some wag introduced an announcement of his sudden demise, "*after a complication of disorders borne for a long series of years with unexampled cheerfulness and resignation.*" The effect on the patient was miraculous! Instead of damping his spirits or shocking his nerves, it set up his lumbagoed back, roused his sluggish spleen, stimulated his torpid liver, stirred his lethargic lights, warmed his congested blood till it boiled a-gallop, and turned his flagging heart to a *cœur de lion*. He declared loudly that the paragraph originated in a political spite—swore that it was intended as a hint for his assassination, and vowed that he would horsewhip the Editor of the diabolical newspaper in his own infernal office.

And he was as good as his word—for which

practical sincerity he had to pay a hundred pounds for damages, and as much more in costs. The cure, however, was complete. His old affections vanished as if by magic; and now his only complaints in the world are of the impudence of counsel, the partiality of judges, the stupidity of juries, the uncertainty of the law, the murderous propensities of the Whigs, the rascality of venal Editors, and the intolerable licentiousness of the Press.

CHAPTER VIII.

"And don't you think, sir," asks Self Preservation, in a close ball-proof silk corslet, under his figured waistcoat, "don't you think that the fellow who takes another man's life, though only in a newspaper, ought to be shut up for ever, if not hung—as a Homicidal Monomaniac?"

By no means—nor will you either, my dear Number One, when your feelings, which temporary excitement has raised from Blood Heat to the Fever Pitch, have subsided to their natural temperature. For my own part, I blush for my countrymen. There is something of cowardice as well as cruelty in the present irrational outcry for chains, cells, straight-jackets, and—fie on it!—even halters for the lunatic. A return to the barbarous system

of our ancestors, when insanity was treated as a crime, and punished with a severity beyond the severest prison discipline of the present day.

"No matter," says Number One, "I stick by the first law of Nature—so Protection! Protection! Protection!"

"Protection! Protection!" shrieks Fear, with her hand before her eyes.

"Protection, Pro—tection," shouts Folly, out of wantonness, – and the Spirit of Imitation, like Echo, repeats the cry.

"Protection! Protection!" bawl a million voices, while with better reason, Conscious Guilt—the poor man's Oppressor—the Robber of the Widow and the Orphan—the Heart-Breaker, and the Brain-Breaker, vociferously swells the clamour, aware in his felon soul how richly he has earned the stab or the shot from the weapon of frenzy!

For my own part, my fears look the other way, and my cry would be for better defence against the Sane. Not the half-witted, but the sharp-witted—not the crazy, but the clear-headed—not the non-compos, but the homicidal lucid fellows who do not babble of Covenants, or Chambers's Journal, or the Customs, who neither brandish knives, nor draw triggers, nor even "throw about fire"—and yet deliberately take our lives, for they do "take the

means by which we live." Against such, O Law and Justice! defend *me*. Only protect me from the sane Foxes, and I will take my chance about the March Hares!

Still Society, with her numberless throats, roars "Protection!"

Heavens! what are a few bewildered creatures roaming the earth, though furnished with sticks, staves, swords, and guns, to the legion of sound Destructives who go at large, armed with "a little brief authority," and a billy-roller or a forge-hammer! When did Homicidal Monomania, with all her mischievous malignity, and all her weapons, when did she cripple a child per day, or poke out thirty pairs of eyes during one short court mourning?

But still the Hydra shouts, with all its mouths in chorus, for "Protection!"

Such popular outcries against a class are always perilous, and apt to lead to cruelty and injustice. So, perhaps, some centuries ago originated a prejudice and persecution against a description of human beings quite as forlorn and desolate, only the Homicidal Monomaniacs of those times were called Wizards and Witches.

It is fit and proper, no doubt, for the security of society, that dangerous Lunatics should be so

confined as to prevent their carrying any murderous design into effect—but to judge by the popular ferment, and the vehemence of the outcry for more Protection, I fear Society would hardly be satisfied with any thing short of the incarceration of every individual who happened to go ungartered, or to button his doublet awry; and above all, the establishment of a Cordon Sanitaire between South and North Britain, with positive orders to shoot every Scotchman who crossed the Tweed with a bee in his bonnet. For be it noted, that Scotland comparatively swarms with what she calls, in her own dialect, "daft, or dementit bodies"—every city, every town, nay, every pelting petty village has its crazy or imbecile Goose Gibbie, or Davie Gellatly. Nevertheless, even the Provosts and the Bailies sleep in whole skins, and would be intensely surprised if they could not get their lives insured at as low rates as their neighbours.

The truth is, the English public was always haunted—as Goldsmith points out in his Essays—by some popular Bugbear; and he instances an epidemic terror of Mad Dogs. There is something of this national characteristic in the present panic, which really amounts to a general monomania about monomaniacs. Every day some person or other denounces his or her homicidal lunatic; and

as human heads cannot be rung like bells or glasses, or sounded like sovereigns on wooden-counters or stone-steps, to ascertain if they are cracked, the magistrates are sorely puzzled, and half-crazed themselves, by a question on which Lawyers with Physicians, and even Doctors with Doctors, are at issue. The dispute between the two learned Professions promises, indeed, to become "a very pretty quarrel."

"And pray, sir, how do you think it will end?"

Heaven only knows, madam. But, between ourselves, I do not despair of a very Rabelaisian termination—namely, the Big Wigs proving that the Gold-Headed Canes know nothing about Mental Disease; and the Gold-Headed Canes proving that the Big Wigs know nothing about Jurisprudence.

CHAPTER IX.

"Hark!" cries Alarm, holding up a warning finger, listening and looking as if she saw something.

"Eh!—what!—where?" inquires bewildered Surdity, dancing with excitement, and looking hastily North—Nor-nor-East,—Nor-East,—East-Nor-East—East, and so all round the compass.

"A Comet of the first magnitude," says Rumour, bedecked in her old robe, all over tongues, and breathless with running down "all sorts of streets."

"A what?" asks Surdity, eagerly poking his acoustical mainpipe into his best ear, and trying to lay on the report. "A new Comedian?"

"No—a great new Comic that has appeared in the Hare," bawls officious Ignorance into the bell of the flexible Voice-Conductor. "A voluminous body, with an inflammatory tail, as reaches, they say, from Sir William Herschel in England, to Mr. Cooper in Italy."

"Three hundred and sixty degrees in length," puts in Popular Exaggeration.

"Why then we shall have a fiery belt all round us," exclaims a female voice from Prospect House —"like the Planet Satan."

"An awful Phenomenon!" says Mrs. Aspenall, trembling like a leaf.

"A Fiery Dragon!" mutters Superstition: "with a sul-*furious* tail of burning brimstone, from the bottomless pit."

"We shall all be burnt alive!" roars Vulgar Error, running into the back-yard, and plumping up to his chin in the water-butt.

"There will be another Deluge!" cries a

Whistonian Theorist, determined at any price to purchase a life-boat and a cork-jacket; having proved in print, that Noah's Flood was certainly caused by a Comet.

"It will approximate into physical collision with our terrestrial globe," says the Schoolmaster, abroad, "and obliterate our sublunary planet into infinitesimal fractions!"

"We shall have changes and revolutions," murmurs a Continental Monarch with pale lips.

"War! Pestilence! and Famine!" bellows a Modern Astrologer!

"And Earthquakes," croaks an unshaken believer in the shocking predictions of the old Monk of Dree and Doctor Dee.

"It will blow up our Powder-Works," groans a resident near Waltham Abbey.*

"And dry up our Water-Works," moans a Chelsea Director, turning to all the colours of a *Dolphin* out of its element.

"It's played the dickens already with the Consternations," says Ignorance. "They do say as how it's singed the Ram, set fire to the Wirgin, roasted the Bull whole, scorched up the Man

* As good a prophecy as any of Zadkiel's: for the Waltham Powder Works actually blew up, about a fortnight after the hint in print.

with the Watering-pot, and fried all the heavenly Fishes!"

"So much the better!" ejaculates the Lord Mayor.

"So much the better!" exclaims his Worship of Bow-street.

"So much the better!" cries his Worship of Marlborough-street.

"So much the better!" observes his Worship of Hatton-Garden.

"So much the better!" remarks his Worship of Marylebone.

"So much the better!" echoes his Worship of Queen-square.

"So much the better?" says his Worship of Worship-street, briskly rubbing his hands together, and drawing a long deep sigh of satisfaction from somewhere about the solar plexus—"so much the better! The public panic will now perhaps take another direction, and instead of the daily monomaniac, and the everlasting question, "*How's his head?*" it will be, "*Where's its tail?*"

CHAPTER X.

But Mr. Hatband—

The Undertaker was so delighted with the interest I had taken in his work, and the decora-

tion of the coffin, that on parting, he presented to me his card, which he gave me with a pleasure only inferior to mine on receiving it, but derived from a very different source—he supposing that I had some funeral order in store for him, and I exulting that there had been no occasion, on my own behalf, for his services—in reality, feeling very much like a man who has just escaped, untouched, from meeting with a dead shot.

The sun was shining brilliantly, and the morning was delicious; one of those Spring mornings when we seem to walk on spring-boards; but never on elastic wood, or turf, did man tread so lightly as Peregrine Phœnix, Esq., on the broad flat flagstones, pleasantly contemplating, now and then, the active shadow, which proved that he was not a shade. It was the most agreeable promenade I ever enjoyed—that solitary walk to the West End —making a dozen satisfactory purchases by the way; for example, a stick of red sealing-wax, simply because it was not black—a piece of Holland linen for shirting, which "was warranted to wear well," and two pair of trousers that were ticketed "Everlastings." The next shop but one to the draper's was a Circulating Library, a rather petty repository; but there was a placard of the terms in the window, and although the act cost me a

guinea, I could not resist going in and subscribing *for a year.*

A Statuary's a few yards further on, supplied me, like the Undertaker's, with some very comfortable cogitation. For the first time since my birth, I found a charm in potbellied monumental Urns—in stone-blind Cherubs with wigs *à la mode* and alabaster—and in petrified Angels, with wings of good solid masonry, blowing dumb coach-horns. They were finer to me, in my peculiar frame of mind, than Phidian sculptures. And then those polished, snowlike marble slabs and tablets, how cheerfully they shone in the bright sunshine! It was indeed my lucky day, *marked with white stones!* Yes, lucky, although in turning away from the statuary's, I was run against, full butt, by a workman with a package of laths under his arm, that came in uncomfortable contact with my body, a little below the chest. But the poor fellow begged my pardon so humbly, that it was impossible for a Christian, and especially under my circumstances, to refuse it.

"Well, well, pick up my hat. That poke in the stomach has given me a strong conviction, at any rate, of my corporeal vitality."

"I'm sorry to hear it, sir," replied the workman, "I am indeed, and I hope it's a feeling as will soon wear off."

But my greatest triumphs awaited me at my Club. Oh! the indescribable look of the porter, when he saw my Ghost thrust open the glazed door!—the unutterable astonishment of the waiter when my Apparition ordered a biscuit and a glass of sherry—the profound mystification of my friend B. when my Spirit carelessly asked him the current price of Long Annuities. The other members present were equally amazed. Some started up—most of them ejaculated—all stared—one choked—and a tumbler of Bass's Pale Ale dropped with a crash on the floor. Had I walked into the room *à la* Phœnix, in a pair of incombustible asbestos trousers, blazing with burning spirits of wine, there could not have been a greater sensation. However, the excitement subsided at last, and gave place to boisterous congratulations. The news of my sudden demise had circulated amongst my club intimates and acquaintance, and to do them justice they hailed my resurrection from my ashes as cordially as if they had conjointly underwritten my life.

A House Dinner was proposed to celebrate my revival; and fixed for seven precisely. The interval I employed chiefly in the pleasant task of composing a public contradiction of the paragraph in the *Herald*, and writing bulletins of my perfect health to all my friends and acquaintances, and

some few others, including a tradesman or two, and the actuary of the Eagle Assurance. And when the missives were done and delivered to the house-steward for the post, with what gusto I added, "Mind, not the Dead Letter Office!"—while the steward stared by turns at the enormous *red* seal, and the staring P. PHŒNIX, in the corner of each envelope, intended to *break my life* to my correspondents.

"And did the dinner go off well, Mr. Phœnix?"

Excellently, madam. The best I ever ate. Every delicacy of the season—the most delicious fruits I ever tasted—the most exquisite wines I ever drank. Then every body was in capital spirits, and myself above all (good reason why)—joking, punning, telling my best stories (dead men tell no tales), and laughing, like one of the Immortals. Then after the cloth was drawn, the toasts that were drunk—not in solemn silence—but vociferously, with all the honours, "The Arabian Bird,"—"Never say Die,"—"Many Happy Returns of the Day," and the songs that were sung, and the speeches that were made, including my own, in which I assured the company, with unusual sincerity, that upon my life (a phrase since become habitual with me) it was the happiest day of my life—one to be remembered to my last hour

—but which, in spite of somebody putting on my clock, like the grim Covenanter in "Old Mortality," had not yet arrived.

"Hear, hear, hear!" shouted my auditors, and to tell the truth, I joined lustily in their cheering, out of sheer self-congratulation. If ever a human biped enjoyed the nine-fold vitality of the feline quadruped, it was mine at that moment. I was full, brimming, overflowing with life; there was enough in me, had I been chopped up like a polypus, to animate a dozen Phœnixes!

It was nearly dawn ere we broke up, when between two companions, who—these are Confessions—looked sometimes like four, I set out to walk home, not walking as a mechanic plods to his work, or as an invalid ambulates for exercise, but with occasional skips and curvetings, or a little run, in one of which courses my head came in collision with a lamp-post, and gratified me with ocular demonstration of my existence in a shower of vital sparks. Nor yet did we proceed quite so mum-chance as quakers, or boarding-school misses, but whistling, warbling trios, and occasionally shouting in chorus, when just at the bottom of Waterloo-place, or it might be the top of the Haymarket—by some mystery not to be explained—through some *Casus Belli* never clearly defined—for it was

in the days of Tom and Jerryism, when war was seldom formally declared—all at once I found myself engaged in battle royal, or rather republican—it was so free and independent—with an unknown number of opponents. My new life, probably, was in danger, for I fought for it like a tiger, wrestling, hugging, tugging, kicking, pushing, striking right and left, and being kicked, pushed, and belaboured in return. One unlucky punch, I suspect, punched out my centre of gravity, from my difficulty afterwards in keeping my legs. Sometimes I was on my feet, sometimes on my head, now on my back, then on my front, then on my side, and then on my seat—bounding, scrambling, rolling, up again, posturing, squaring, warding, and down again—at first dry, next wet, then tattered and torn, but still fighting, encouraged by shouts of "Go it, Lively!" though purblind, giddy, bleeding, and almost out of that precious article, my breath. Still the battle raged with various success; my spirit, or spirits, for I seemed to have several within me, yet unsubdued, when just in the middle of a furious rally, in the very crisis of victory, I was caught up horizontally, and before tongue could cry rescue, Peregrine Phœnix, Esquire, the Dead Man of the *Morning Herald*, was borne off kicking and shouting at

the top of his voice "Hurrah for Life—Hurrah for Life — Hurrah for Life — Life — Life in London!"

THE OMNIBUS.

A SKETCH ON THE ROAD.

It was a fine evening in Autumn, but late enough to be dusk, as my friend F. was driving me, in his gig, along a road near Chigwell, in Essex, when suddenly we were startled by loud and repeated screams, as from numerous female voices.

F. immediately pulled up:—whilst the alarming chorus was repeated from throats in better time than unison—followed by entreaties for help.

The sounds came from above; and looking up towards the top of the bank on the right hand side of the road, which was cut through a hill, we perceived an omnibus, with two females perched on the roof, and another on the box, who held the whip and the reins. At every window, moreover, appeared one or two caps or bonnets, accounting for the full chorus we had just heard.

Leaving our own vehicle in the road, we hastened to the rescue; and having first helped the ladies to alight, proceeded to get the omnibus into the road—a task of considerable difficulty.

The females in the meanwhile scrambled down to the low ground, where we found them clustered round the senior of the party, who, seated on the stump of a tree, was giving way to sundry gesticulations and exclamations, which being echoed and imitated by a fugle-woman on either side, were copied and repeated again by some eighteen young ladies of various ages and very different sizes. In reality, the Principal, teachers, and pupils of Prospect-House Establishment, at Woodford.

"O! I never!" exclaimed the Governess: and eighteen juvenile voices and two middle-aged ones instantly reiterated, "O, I never!"

"It's a Providence we were not killed!" cried the Governess; and as if they had been at their responses in church, the twenty voices simultaneously repeated, "Providence we were not killed!"

My experience in the suburban woodlands suggested a tolerable guess at the truth, which the narrative of Mrs. Vandeleur afterwards confirmed. The ladies of Prospect House Establishment had been enjoying their annual Gipsying in Epping Forest—a festival from which prudence and principle rigorously excluded the other sex, with the exception of one Tobias, who during the illness of

the household coachman, had been recommended for the service, as a sober, steady, civil, and family man. Well, they had gone, she said, to the old perennial rendezvous, a certain retired spot, secure from vulgar intrusion, and betaken themselves to their rural recreations, some pursuing Entomology (she meant hunting butterflies), others studying botany (by picking harebells and looking for "eagles" and "oak trees" in sliced fern-stalks), the graphical sketching picturesque stumps, and landskipping—and the young ones picking ladybirds, or playing at hide and seek. For herself, she had enjoyed "Sturm's Reflections" under an umbrageous beech, whilst Miss Tancred and Miss Groper spread the hospitable cloth on Flora's lap, and disposed on it the viands and beverages congenial to a Juvenile Fête Champêtre, namely, cold pigeon pie, ham and beef sandwiches, and tea-cakes, with flasks of home-made gooseberry, currant, and cowslip wine, and a few bottles of porter and ale, for the more mature of the sylvan revellers. These good things, with grace before and after, having been duly discussed, not forgetting the allotment of a portion for Tobias—the votaries of Flora, &c. again betook themselves to their rural felicity till recalled by the sound of a large handbell, when her little flock having been

counted over, they proceeded to the rendezvous,—a majestic Monarch of the Forest, alias a large oak—and punctual to appointment there stood the green Omnibus, the PARAGON, with its horses ready harnessed—but where was Tobias?

In vain twenty shrill voices made the woods ring with "Tobias!—bias!—ias!"—no Tobias answered. In speechless alarm, the anxious females clustered again around the Governess, gazing in each other's faces with blank looks, when suddenly they were startled by a strange sound from the interior of the vehicle.—Yes, there certainly was somebody snoring in the omnibus, but nobody cared to verify the fact, by inspection, for suppose it should not be Tobias? At last the more courageous Miss Groper ventured to open the door and look in, and alas! for human frailty! Tobias it was indeed, helplessly, hopelessly drunk!

Poor Tobias! Too corpulent to skip after butterflies, or climb for birds' nests, too ignorant to read "Sturm's Reflections," or in truth any thing else, and unable to play at hide and seek with himself, he had found the time pass away very tediously,

Under the shade of melancholy boughs.

He had looked at the sole of each boot, more than once, and into the crown of his hat still oftener,

and had blown his nose, and counted the fourpence halfpenny in his pocket over and over, but he could not always be blowing his nose without a cold, or counting fourpence halfpenny. How then was he to occupy or amuse himself but by eating and drinking?—the last, indeed, being encouraged by the heat of the weather, and the discovery of certain bottles of ale and stout, and home-made wines amongst the remnants of the feast. So tapping a bottle of ale, he quaffed it off, not without drinking the health of the Governess and the ladies in general, succeeded by more particular toasts, as the "young 'oman in the welwet cape," "she in the blue bonnet," and the like. Then he drank the porter, and then he instinctively put to the horses, for the fatigue of which he refreshed himself with another bottle of ale, and then tasted the wines, and then feeling drowsy, crept into the further corner of the 'bus for a nap, till the arrival of the company. But the malt liquor had been more potent, and his slumber was deeper than he had reckoned on. The maidens might as well have attempted to rouse Rip Van Winkle.

What was to be done? There was not a house within reach, or a creature within hail. The gloom of evening was fast deepening, and the prospect of being benighted in the Forest, associ-

ated, by some at least, with wild beasts and banditti, reconciled the females, old and young, to the only alternative. The Governess and the majority of the ladies got into the omnibus, allowing the horrid creature as wide a berth as they could—the two teachers ascended outside to the roof—and the box was assigned to Miss Wrigglesworth, who on the strength of having once driven a donkey shay, assumed the whip and the ribbons, and set the horses in motion by one cut at the reins and another at the traces. Luckily the horses were steady and sensible animals, and being allowed their own way at first, kept the coach out of difficulties, till the charioteer attempting some manœuvres of her own, contrived to perch the omnibus on an eminence dangerous even for a Paragon.

The rest may be briefly told. Tobias was dragged from the vehicle by the legs, and after a hearty shaking was secured, by the side of F. in the gig. The omnibus, I volunteered to pilot to Prospect House, where I safely deposited its precious freight—the Governess literally overwhelming me with her acknowledgments—and the young ladies declaring one and all, with every appearance of sincerity, that "they would never, never, never go any where again *without Gentlemen.*"

MR. WAKLEY AND THE POETS.

Hark thee, Thomas, do thine ears know the singing of Blondel from the braying of an ass. THE TALISMAN.

IT must often have puzzled editors to account for the deluge of Poetry, so called, which of late years has poured into the Balaam-boxes of the periodicals. Indeed, there is no Magazine or Literary Journal but from time to time has had to announce the utter impossibility of returning such contributions to the authors—just such an impossibility as beset Mrs. Partington when she attempted to send back the Atlantic.

For our own part, the phenomenon has been a standing wonder; as month after month we found our library table covered with fresh verse—rhyme enough to fill whole magazines. *Where* could it all come from? What sort of laborious creatures could thus keep spin, spin, spinning on, without profit, and without encouragement, for not a hundredth—no, not a thousandth part obtained insertion.

The mystery, however, is solved. The deluge of bad poetry—the rush of rhyme is accounted

for; and Editors in future will be able to attribute any extraordinary high-tide of sing-song to its true source. Astounding as it may seem, considering his multifarious occupations as Member of Parliament, Coroner, and Editor of a medical work, yet by his own confession during the debate on the Copyright Bill, Mr. Wakley, besides spouting, sitting on bodies, and Lancet-grinding, has actually been composing poetry—not by the page or sheet, but by the standard mile and the imperial bushel.

It would of course be impossible to trace all the effusions of such a very prolific versifier: but personally we are convinced that we have been favoured with at least a few pecks, and rods poles or perches of the manufacture of this new Thomas the Rhymer. All the anonymous pieces were his of course, as well as those signed T. or W., and we venture to attribute to the same hand, on internal evidence, a few furlongs of poetry that have been sent under other initials. But the mass had all one common characteristic: a certain wooden style, strongly reminding us that the author represents Finsbury Square, where, as we all know, the Temple of the Muses was turned into an Upholstery Warehouse.

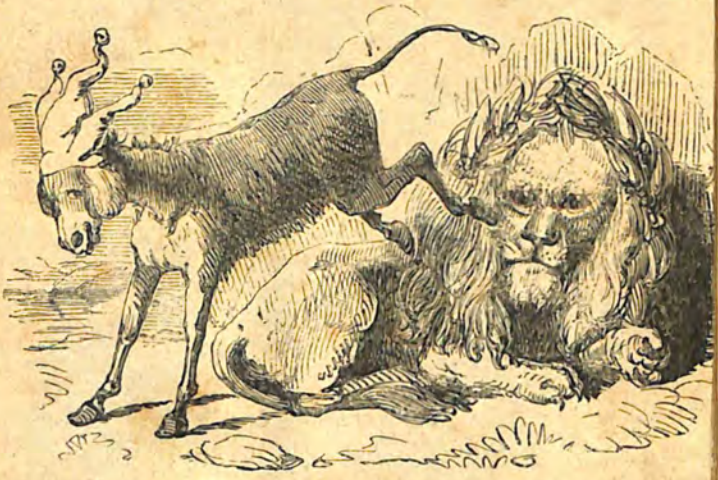
And, now, do we envy the new Poet his extraordinary facility? Do we begrudge him his

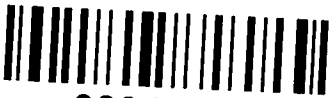
miraculous knack of rhyming, his poetical bottom and long-windedness? Not a jot. But we do resent the ungraciousness with which, after confessing himself a Bard, he turned round on the Brotherhood, and like a Malay running a-muck, made a rush at a venerable Poet, whose age and character ought to have secured him from such an onset. Could there be in the case any of that literary jealousy so commonly attributed to the sons of song?

"It is impossible," said Mr. Wakley, "to satisfy a disappointed author." And having failed so egregiously in his own poetical pursuits, we can imagine him to have been particularly dissatisfied with those of his contemporaries who had obtained name and fame, and money into the bargain. Accordingly, sweeping together the best and brightest names in our literature, he called them all, and in particular the copyright petitioners, "a set of literary quacks." As to authors, what were they in usefulness compared to Doctors, or even Apothecaries? What was a Shakspeare, a Milton, a Scott, or a Wordsworth, to any Ollapod who, when a farmer fell from a load of hay, and fractured his skull, could raise up the depressed bone again with an instrument called an elevator?

We thank thee, Jew, for teaching us that word!

An Elevator!—why what is poetry but an elevator, not of a paltry bit of bone, but of the Human Soul? We concede, then, to Mr. Wakley the full advantage of his surgical case—we allow all the blessing of the poor agriculturist being enabled, within five minutes, to sit up in bed and receive the caresses of his wife and children: but we really must beg leave to remind the Honourable Story-teller that whilst his surgeon was setting to rights the broken skull of one farmer, our Authors were operating beneficially on the brains of Millions!

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